

TOTAL



EXCLUSIVE!
**FANTASTIC
BEASTS**
POTTER PREQUEL
UNLEASHED

◆◆◆◆◆ Plus ◆◆◆◆◆



ADAM DRIVER
Kyro kicks back



**MARION
COTILLARD**
On female power



BAD SANTA 2
On-set and sweary

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**BLADE
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Set secrets

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**Doctor
Strange**

MARVEL DOES
INCEPTION

◆◆◆◆◆
**“IT’S GOING TO BE
MIND-BLOWING!”**

Benedict Cumberbatch

Return to
**AMERICAN
WEREWOLF**

◆◆◆◆◆
20
HATE-WATCH
HORRORS

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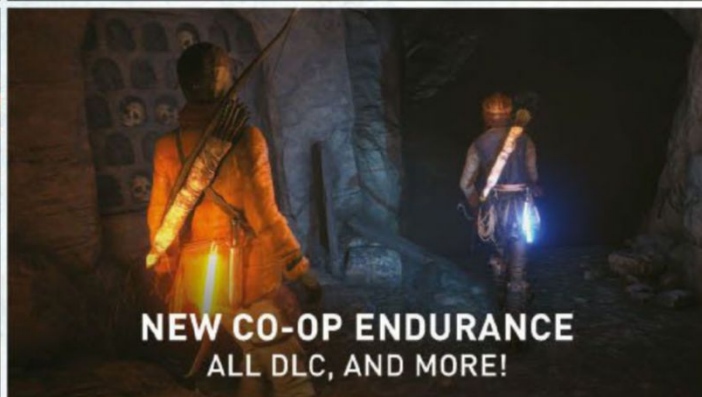
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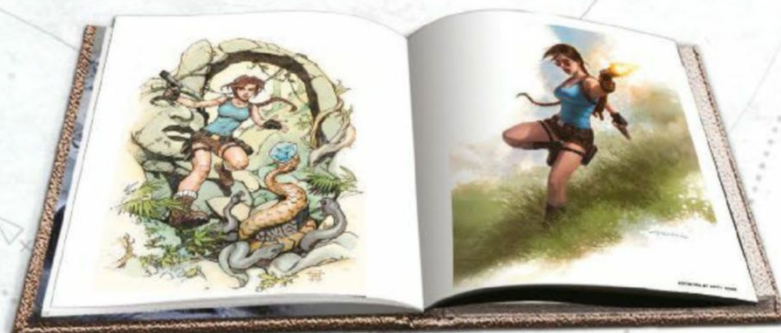
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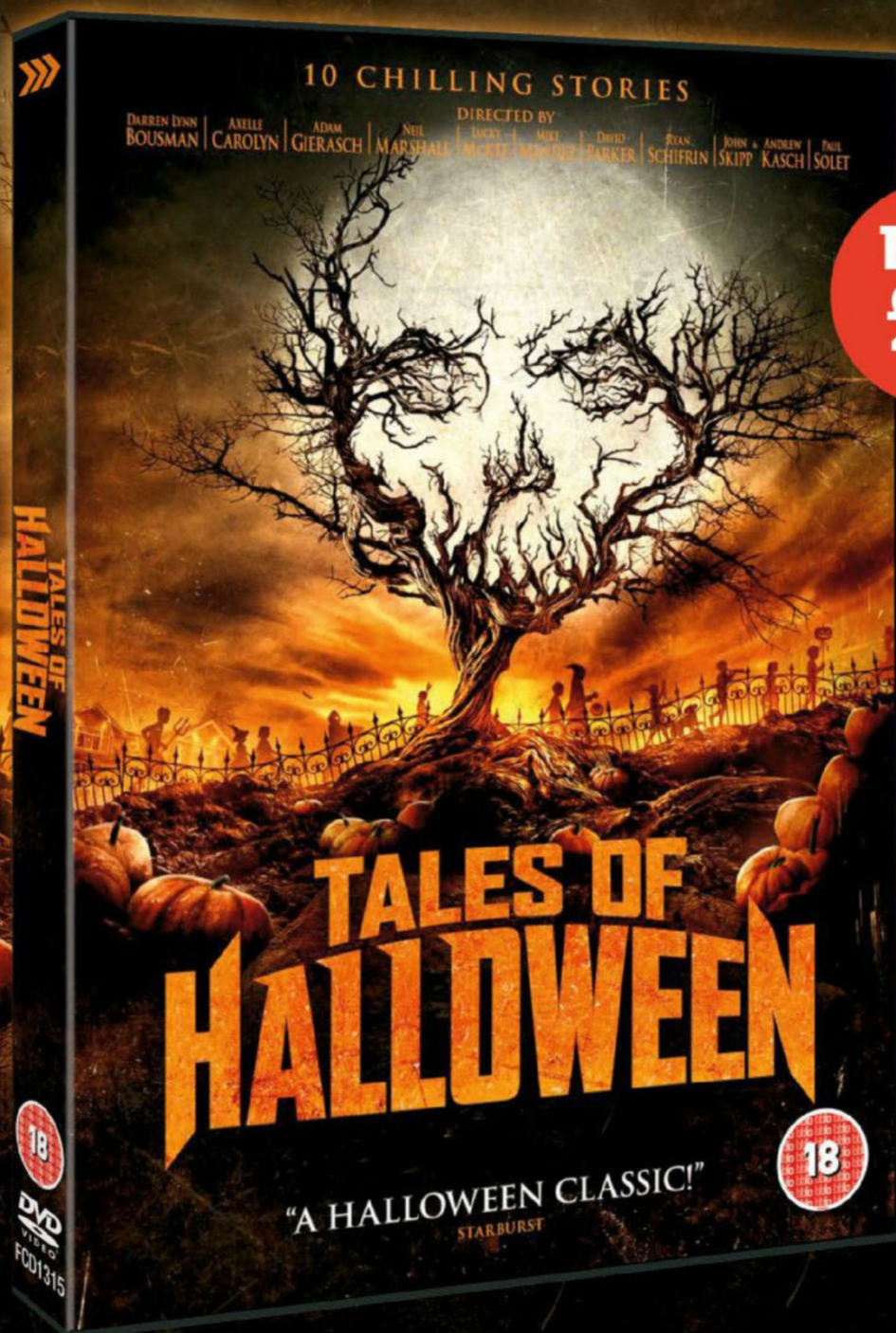
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WELCOME TO TOTAL FILM THE SMARTER MOVIE MAGAZINE



This month the *TF* team had household injuries a-plenty (a mandolin thumb slice and a broken glass gash that required stitches), so it's apt we should be concentrating our efforts on a medic (who has his own digit disaster) in MCU's latest offering, *Doctor Strange*. We chatted to both Benedicts and the rest of the gang, plus, in between chasing the cast around the world, we also caught up with Adam Driver, Marion Cotillard, Aaron Eckhart (whose multi-lingual skills are most impressive) and Mel Gibson for heartfelt discussions about their work. We also tracked down the *Snowden* team and got angsty with the crew from *Manchester By The Sea*. And as Oscar season approaches, we're all watching plenty of prestige pics – which is why we felt the need to off-set them with the horribly good cinematic turds of this world in our salute to hate-watch flicks. (Let us know if we missed any stinkers.)

ENJOY THE ISSUE!

Jane

Jane Crowther, Editor-in-Chief

CALL SHEET THIS ISSUE'S EXTRAS



MATTHEW LEYLAND
REVIEWS EDITOR

Met an actress (shshsh, can't say who) who loved my *Star Wars* t-shirt and was so complimentary that we nearly used up our chat time discussing it.



JORDAN FARLEY
NEWS EDITOR

Met Sigourney Weaver this month and somehow resisted the urge to bombard her with questions about *Aliens* (my favourite film). Journalistic integrity!



MATT MAYTUM
FEATURES EDITOR

Spent half the month in Toronto for the film festival. Got stuck in a restaurant when Leonardo DiCaprio rocked up and caused a Beatlemania-style scrum.

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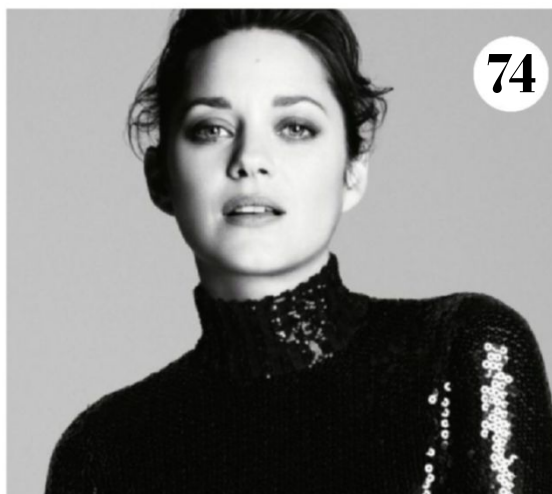


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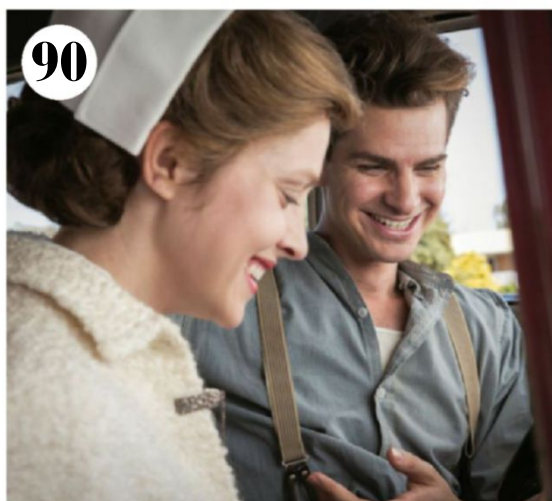
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ATTACK OF THE LEDERHOSEN ZOMBIES

THE HILLS
ARE ALIVE...



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Dialogue

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TF'S CINEMATIC AGONY
UNCLE HAS YOUR BACK.

DEAR WINGMAN

I'm looking to do the entire top 250 films on the Internet Movie Database in a year and need some advice on the best way to tackle the feat. Some films I already own, most I don't, so am looking to TF for any assistance in this matter.

MATT PALFREEMAN, CHELLASTON

WINGMAN SAYS...

Probs the best advice we can give is: get a shuffle on! Because it's a 'live' list, so something new could be added any minute, knocking out something you've just paid a small fortune for on eBay... all kinds of pain, basically. Or maybe wait until the upcoming awards season is done and dusted as that's bound to shake things up a bit. Also, get the lengthier movies out of the way first (as a general rule, any titles that start *Once Upon A Time In...*). Have a question for Wingy? Email me!



STAR LETTER

★ First of all, the new look is great. Secondly, I owe a debt of gratitude to the 'Is It Bollocks?' section from TF250. I've not seen *The Legend Of Tarzan*, but two colleagues had a few issues with certain aspects of it and had a lot to say about the jungle man using ants to stitch himself up. Thanks to the insightful, in-depth info you provided, I was able to correct them and set the record straight! Still haven't seen the film though!

DAN, CAERPHILLY



You're welcome. We've got big love for that section too – not least for the puerile reason that on our mag plan it gets shortened to 'Buff Bollocks'. Which sounds like some new Cockney member (ahem) of the *Magic Mike* gang. Dan and everyone with a letter printed here will receive a copy of *Central*

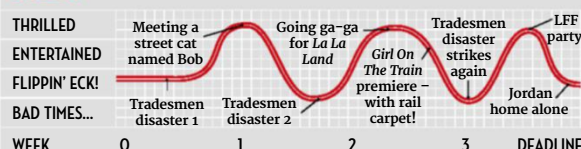
Intelligence, available on digital download right now and on Blu-ray/DVD from 31 October, courtesy of Universal Pictures UK. Didn't send an address? Email it! It's almost as funny as *San Andreas*.

BOBA FRET

I have been thinking! I am not sure I want a Boba Fett movie! He is so intriguing because he is mostly in my head and my imagination. I do not want a movie to ruin all the mystique! I like him because he is so secret and unknown. I just want him to be in the background, looking cool and being frustrated he is not allowed to disintegrate things. However, I would

IN THE BUFF
The Legend Of Tarzan's use of ants as medical tools wasn't total bollocks.

FILM REFLECTIVE INTEREST CURVE™





Making Boba Fett the star of his own spin-off inspires mixed feelings.



like a Bossk movie (all in subtitles), or a *Cheers*-style Cantina sitcom. They would be awesome! Please and thank you!

ALEX ELLIOT, ASHFORD

Well, the *Star Wars* spin-offs are expected to be a bit more offbeat and experimental, so maybe the hook will be that Boba Fett is barely in his own movie, or just mingles with the extras while some no-mark does all the dialogue and stuff. And yes to a Cantina-com; you could save Disney \$200 mill by just sticking a camera in *Dialogue*'s local boozier on Friday night.

SWAYZE DOES IT

I recently found myself watching *Dirty Dancing* again (probably for the 100th time) and it got me thinking. I know how much you love a good list, so I challenge *Total Film* to compile a list of the Best Romantic Leading Men. This is a purely selfish request on my part as I want to see where you would rank Patrick Swayze; he'd obviously be a contender, but what about Ryan

Gosling, Humphrey Bogart, Tom Hanks, Cary Grant, Heath Ledger – all of whom have swept me off my feet.

HANNAH JONES, FAREHAM

A staff straw poll indeed threw up the mighty Swizzle's name, alongside Leo in *Titanic*, Gregory Peck in *To Kill A Mockingbird* ("He can come and sort out my briefs") and Ted in *Ted*. We tried to sort out a ranking, but it all went a bit *Civil War* on the office cobblestones.

QUOTE TRIP

Does my family need help? We appear to be suffering from a form of movie-dialogue Tourette's. Take these examples from our recent holiday. On seeing the flight crew at our departure gate: "So Dunn you were under Oveur and over Unger." "That's right, Dunn was over Unger and I was over Dunn". In the restaurant: "Excuse me Flo, what's the soup de jour?" "Soup of the day." "Sounds good, I'll have that!" And on our last day: "Everyone's packing round 'ere."

OFFICE SPACED

Chatter 'gems' overheard in the *Total Film* office this month...

- * Do you think there's any chance my cats could forget who I am?"
- * "It's hard work sucking."
- * "Don't blame the biscuit rustle!"
- * "Why are carrots SO LOUD?"



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STAR WARS MOVIES BEYOND 2020: DISCUSS

<http://bit.ly/2dr74TW>

"Enjoyed *Ep VII* but where will it end? Jar Jar spin-off? Jabba: The Teenage Years??" @iwanwills; "2021??? Hope I'm here to see them!!" @vrb1955; "Uhhhhhhhhh" @hazzscience



RAINBOW BAGELS OF THE MONTH

<http://bit.ly/2dGREsw>

Promoting the UK International Jewish Film Festival (5-20 November). Yes, they do look a bit Play-Doh-y, but provided a very satisfying chew.



WILD WEST FREEBIES OF THE MONTH

<http://bit.ly/2cQBBrVA>

Marking the IMAX release of *The Magnificent Seven*, this little package had us yee-haww-ing. Then came the screams as the Buckaroo! mule lobbed its load at the TF kettle...



LION KING REMAKE: YOUR THOUGHTS

<http://bit.ly/2dprKij>

"Hell yeah!!! @DLJWebster; "Simba rips Pumba apart in first five mins" @Beanie087244; "April fools... no, wait..." @Keymahan; "Excited but nervous" @TitanicLover93



MOUSTACHES OF THE MONTH

<http://bit.ly/2dHAWK9>

There's no Friday fun like sticking-on-a-fake-'tache Friday fun, courtesy of *The Infiltrator*. Note the extraordinary – some would say suspicious – ease with which our Josh gets into character.



CAT PHOTO BOMB OF THE MONTH

<http://bit.ly/2dQ7ty5>

Long story short, we were sent some goodies for home-invasion horror *Don't Breathe*. Somehow a plush cat made it into the pic. Embarrassment is, kitty was a promo for Kevin Spacey stinker *Nine Lives*...



KUBO LIGHTBOX

<http://bit.ly/2dQeMWD>

Kubo And The Two Strings is no ordinary 'toon, so it was apt to get this lightbox that dramatically silhouettes our hero in all his glory. The paper screen's been up and down like a window-cleaner's ladder.



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"Like?" "Farmers." "And?" "Farmers' mums." Is there a doctor in the TF readership who can help us?

DESPERATE DAVEY, VIA EMAIL

Houston, you have a problem; what you've got here is a failure to communicate, my precious. Also, please tell us you didn't disturb the other hotel guests with any Meg Ryan impersonations.

VIEWING FIGURES

In response to Chris Goodall's letter in *TF251*, as of the beginning of October I've been to see 123 films at the cinema this year. I've reached similar numbers over the past four years, first by working in a cinema where you get an allocation of free tickets (side note: I got fired for throwing a large drink at a customer in retaliation for them throwing something at me – no regrets there) and because I now own a monthly pass. For the record, I've dozed off during a good third of those films.

JAKE HUMPHRIES, WERRINGTON

On Saturday, I saw film 127 of the year (123 different films). Check out my list on twitter.com/velvetcactus198 or #psfr. I've seen at least 160 films for each of the last 10 years and my record is 201 in a year!

PETER SISSON, VIA EMAIL

Excellent effort chaps, keep it up. Also impressed by Jake's dozing – it's not easy to snooze in cinemas

these days, what with all the people talking on the phone about how they can't talk on the phone, because they're in the cinema. And don't even get us started on the whole vicious circle of loud shushers themselves receiving a good shushing.

PETER'S FRIEND

Inspired by your regular 'Is It Just Me' feature, I have to ask – am I the only one that thinks *Hook* is possibly Steven Spielberg's greatest movie? It may not have defined the summer blockbuster like *Jaws*, or have the Oscar-winning clout of *Lincoln*, *Bridge Of Spies* or *Schindler's*

List, but when wanting pure escapism it's the DVD I reach for every time! Incredible practical sets, Robin Williams at his peak, a never-hammier Dustin Hoffman and the late, great Bob Hoskins as Smee! What's not to love? Surely

I can't be the only one who still punches the air and shouts "Bangarang!" at that magical moment when Peter finds his happy thought and takes to the skies again?

SAM FRANCIS, GWENT

Calling all, um, *Hook*-ers! It's certainly a better Pan movie than last year's botched prequel, where they all looked understandably sad on the poster. Any other 'lesser' Spielbergs that readers rate over the classics? Does *War Horse* have more bite than *Jaws*? Are you a *Terminal* case? Can you even remember what the unicorn's secret was in *Tintin*?

THE BLAKE LIST

With news of a new *Lion King* in the offing, here's hoping Disney remake *Mary Poppins* next, but with all the animated bits done in live action and all the live-action bits animated. On another note, I'm looking forward to this new Ken Loach film, but I haven't seen 'A, Daniel Blake', 'B, Daniel Blake', 'C, Daniel Blake', 'D, Daniel Blake', 'E, Daniel Blake', 'F, Daniel Blake', 'G, Daniel Blake' or 'H, Daniel Blake' first. Hope it gets us up to speed quick.

ALEX COLLIER, DURHAM

We'd love to reply to your letter but we're currently spending every minute scouring eBay for the first six *The Magnificent* movies.

TOTALLY HOOKED

A hammy Hoffman represents peak Spielberg to at least one of you.



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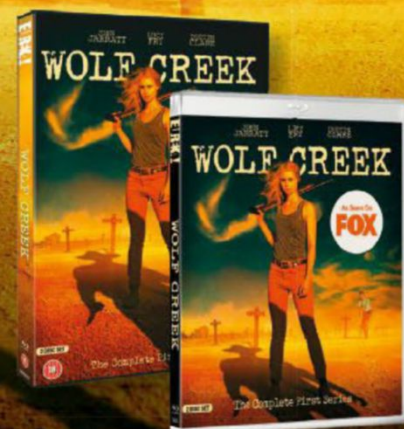
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COMING ATTRACTIONS

- * Classic Hollywood romance returns **p18**
- * Bonkers bad guys off the chain **p26**
- * Cinema's filthiest St. Nick is back **p32**
- * How to put a man on the Moon **p38**

EDITED BY JORDAN FARLEY



EXCLUSIVE

BEAST IN SHOW

FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM | A sneak peek at the Potter prequel that promises to be the year's most magical movie...

It's an extension of the Harry Potter universe, but it's evolved somewhat," says a softly spoken David Yates, who directed the final four Potter movies and is now helming the hugely anticipated spin-off *Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them*. "New York in 1926 is a very different aesthetic to a school. The themes are very grown-up and pertinent to the world we live in now. But yeah, it still has all of Jo [Rowling]'s quintessential charm and humanity and playfulness. Lots of humour and whimsy, but lots of dark, strange things as well." He smiles. "The movie's quite a curious beast."

We're sitting in the Hilton San Diego Bayfront hotel, and Yates and his principal cast – Eddie Redmayne, Colin Farrell, Katherine Waterston, Ezra Miller – have just come from

Comic-Con's Hall H. There, in front of 6,500 people, they dropped a new trailer that was met with ecstatic roars, and the pandemonium only escalated when *Beasts'* central character Newt

Scamander (Redmayne) waded into the crowd to hand out magic wands.

"There is an element in this story about the repression of someone's magic and how that can lead to all sorts of damaging things," continues Yates, returning to the topic of the themes. "People need to express themselves and be heard, to be valued for who they are, however strange or odd they might be." Which of course brings us to the titular beasts... "They're beautiful, amazing, strange creatures, but they're banned in the magical world because

POINT THE WAY
Director David Yates on set with Katherine Waterston and Eddie Redmayne.





they're perceived as threatening or dangerous. Our story is about polarised communities and having to reach out and understand each other."

Redmayne chips in. His face is still flushed from his earlier crowd-walk and yet, curiously, he's wearing a jumper on this most sweltering of West Coast days. "Amazingly, I was allowed five months of working with specific artists who'd be representing specific animals," he begins. "David basically said to me, in relation to the beasts, 'Whatever you think you need.' So we got puppeteers in. We got people dressed up. We got everything. Because it was so important – if you didn't believe Newt and the other characters' relationships with these different animals, then it wasn't going to work. I remember being on the Tube in London and just having Pickett [*a tree guardian, best described as a twig-like man*] with me... I got a few odd looks!"

Set 70 years prior to events in the *Potter* books, *Fantastic Beasts And Where*

To Find Them is inspired by the 2001 book of the same name, written by J.K. Rowling under the pseudonym of Newt Scamander and purporting to be Harry's textbook,

as spied in *Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone*. Rowling herself penned the script. It follows the (mis)adventures of eccentric, introverted magizoologist Newt as he arrives in New York for the Magical Congress of the United States of America (or MACUSA), only for some exotic creatures to escape from his magically expanding briefcase. Already strained, relations between the magical and No-Maj (American for Muggle) worlds plummet disastrously.

"I think we're all so bogged down by the quotidian world," says Farrell, grappling to pinpoint the immense attraction of the Potter-verse. He plays Percival Graves, the shrewd, authoritarian director of Magical Security who tracks Newt as he in turn tracks his beasts. "We're so tired of the constraints of our bodies, and where we fit into this grander idea of the populations that we share around the world. And magic transcends all of

that. It's a limitless possibility. It's thereby transformative." A rueful grin. "Yeah, maybe something like that."

Though otherworldly, the Potter-verse works because it's so recognisable, with Rowling and the filmmakers forever seeking to integrate the magical and the mundane. Each and every aspect must slot together, and this applies to the cast, too.

"We started with Eddie," explains Yates. "Eddie was our foundation. We then put him in a hotel room for a very long weekend, and we flew in lots and lots of very lovely, gracious actors who read with Eddie. What we were looking for was this sort of chemical thing that happens when you get two very fine actors together and you suddenly feel this profound relationship. We were putting a band together, effectively. So Eddie did most of the scenes that are in the movie about 5,000 times before we actually shot them in the movie!"

Waterston, who wowed in Paul Thomas Anderson's *Inherent Vice* and

will next year be seen in Ridley Scott's *Alien: Covenant*, was only too happy to audition. "Every player can play their instrument, but we can't be playing different tunes," she says.

It was, of course, especially crucial that she clicked with Redmayne given her Porpentina Goldstein, who works for the Magical Congress, later becomes 'Tina' Scamander.

As for Miller, who plays Credence Barebone, leader of No-Maj anti-witchcraft group New Salem Philanthropic Society, he was just delighted to be there. "I'm the biggest Potterhead in the cast," he beams. "I obsessively followed it from the age when I first read it, when I was probably seven or eight, all the way until I was 17. I'd listen to the audiobooks literally over and over and over again. I'm talking 50 times."

It's this level of excitement that Yates' film, first of a proposed trilogy, has to live up to. Do that, and it will be a fantastic beast indeed. **JG**

ETA | 18 NOVEMBER / *FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM* OPENS LATER THIS AUTUMN.

RIGHT

Beasts is set in New York, but was shot in Liverpool and at Leavesden Studios.

BELOW LEFT

Percival Graves (Colin Farrell) and Credence Barebone (Ezra Miller) both have their doubts about Scamander.

BELOW RIGHT

(top) David Yates directs a scene and (bottom) Katherine Waterston plays Porpentina Goldstein, Newt's love interest.





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 HOT RIGHT NOW

CHANNING TATUM

DETERMINED TO PUSH HIMSELF
TO THE LIMITS.

I think this is a completely new phase... getting to work with people I've always dreamed of," says Channing Tatum, who's currently enjoying the hottest streak of his career, commercially and artistically. And it's only going to get better.

After bland action roles in *The Eagle*, *G.I. Joe: Retaliation* and *White House Down*, Tatum made a conscious decision to flex his acting muscles and stretch his comedy chops. *Foxcatcher*, *22 Jump Street* and the surprisingly sensual, feminist *Magic Mike XXL* followed, and then came work for Tarantino and the Coens in, respectively, *The Hateful Eight* and *Hail, Caesar!*

Impressive, but how's this for an upcoming slate: *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*, Steven Soderbergh's out-of-retirement heist movie *Logan Lucky*, *Jump Street*/*Men In Black* splice *MIB 23*, the gender-reversal *Splash* remake, and – hopefully – *Gambit*.

"I'm about to get all up in that Golden Circle #Kingsman," tweeted Tatum on 14 April, before in May being papped in London wearing a tailored pinstripe suit, bowler hat and spectacles. Plot details are officially redacted, but rumour has it that Taron Egerton's 'Eggsy' this time heads across the pond to America to join US counterpart 'Statesman' (Tatum). "Channing was only around

for a couple weeks, but he's brilliant in the movie," enthuses Egerton.

The victorious ensemble of *Logan Lucky*, set against the backdrop of a NASCAR race, includes Daniel Craig, Adam Driver, Hilary Swank, Katherine Heigl and Sebastian Stan, while Tatum will play a merman in the *Splash* update. Details for *MIB 23* are yet to be ironed out, and *Gambit* has been pushed to 2017 to ensure the screenplay hits the right tone. "He always felt the most real of the X-Men to me," says Tatum. "He's kind of a tortured soul." **JG**

ETA | 16 JUNE / *KINGSMAN: THE GOLDEN CIRCLE* OPENS NEXT YEAR. *LOGAN LUCKY*, *MIB 23*, *SPLASH* AND *GAMBIT* ARE TBC.



EXCLUSIVE

UNCHARTED WATERS

MOANA | Myths, roosters, the Rock.

Set sail with Disney's most badass hero yet...

Disney's leading ladies have come a long way since the days of *Snow White*; from prisoners in need of saving (*Cinderella* and *Sleeping Beauty*) to heroines in their own right (*Beauty And The Beast* and *Mulan*). Now, in a post-*Frozen* world, the studio's latest animated epic presents a female protagonist as dynamic and convention-defying as any screen action hero today. Welcome to the world of *Moana*.

Set 2,000 years ago in the land of Polynesia, at a time when the migration of South Pacific islanders had stalled for a thousand years, *Moana*'s titular heroine is a 16-year-old girl determined to restore her people's heritage as sea-faring voyagers.

"Moana is the daughter of a chief, and has this call to the ocean," says Ron Clements, who directs alongside regular collaborator John Musker (*The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin*). "She wants to navigate. She wants to voyage in this world where they never cross the reef on their island of Motonui. They believe it's too dangerous. Yet Moana feels this call, and ultimately she ventures on a quest that will involve saving her island."

To that end Moana, voiced by newcomer Auli'i Cravalho, and her pet rooster Hei Hei (whose squawks are supplied by Disney's current good luck charm Alan Tudyk) team up with the

legendary pan-Pacific demigod Maui. This Polynesian Hercules is voiced, naturally, by Dwayne Johnson.

"Dwayne was really excited about the movie," explains Clements, "because his roots are in the South Pacific and he feels really close to that culture. In terms of playing a bigger-than-life demigod, I think Dwayne is fantastic in the role." He laughs. "It's not a huge stretch for him because he somewhat is one in real life!"



LIFE'S A BEACH
Demigod Maui
(Dwayne Johnson)
with Moana
(Auli'i Cravalho).

Like Clements and Musker's hand-drawn animated classics, *Moana* is a musical, with some of its songs provided by *Hamilton*'s Tony Award-winning creator Lin-Manuel Miranda.

"We're also involving musicians from the area," adds Musker. "So some of the music in the movie is not in English. We understand people won't know the literal meaning of some of this music, but I think there'll be a feeling of connection, to allow us into the culture."

WET 'N' WILD

With the ocean itself a character in the film (it's a handy helper during Moana's quest), along with Maui's sentient Jiminy Cricket-like tattoo 'Mini Maui' – and enough monsters to fill a *Lord Of The Rings* movie – Clements and Musker hope *Moana* finds audiences as captivated by the spirit of the South Pacific as they were in making it.

At their film's heart, however, stands a protagonist who's as much a role model for young women as any yet offered by the studio.

"There's a lot of weight put on her shoulders," smiles Clements of their gutsy, gallivanting heroine. "But there is a badass quality to the way she deals with the obstacles that she has to face. She will not let anything stand in her way." **JMc**

ETA | 2 DECEMBER / MOANA OPENS THIS WINTER.

BEHIND THE SCENES

THE HEART OF WAR

ALLIED | Brad Pitt and Marion Cotillard find love behind enemy lines.

Mid-September 2016, *Teasers* is sitting in the Santa Barbara edit suite of legendary filmmaker Robert Zemeckis (the giveaway is the hoverboard on display by the front door). We're here to watch footage from the opening act of WW2 romance *Allied*, as the sham marriage between Brad Pitt's undercover intelligence officer Max Vatan and Marion Cotillard's French Resistance fighter Marianne Beausejour climaxes (ahem) with a steamy sex scene amid a sandstorm. In one corner of the conference room sits a multi-screened *Avid*, which the unfinished footage is beamed from. In the other, an elephant. It's name? *Casablanca*.

"We're not trying to present anything other than the fact that *Casablanca* was the French Riviera of North Africa," Zemeckis says, brushing off comparisons between the Bogie/Bergman classic and his own WW2 romance, which begins in the very same Vichy French colony. "And other than the fact that there was a lot of intrigue going on in *Casablanca* in the early 1940s."

The comparisons are justified, of course. Though the film is part thriller, with Vatan and Beausejour on a mission to kill a high-ranking member of the Nazi party, it's matters of the heart that power the classically framed drama playing out against the backdrop of war. "You're seeing a huge, magnified version of any human drama that takes place in a relationship," Zemeckis explains. "The stakes are the scale of World War 2. Countries' survivals are at risk. It's what I've always liked about the Truffaut definition, that a good movie is the perfect blend of truth and spectacle."

Written by *Peaky Blinders* creator Steven Knight and produced by regular Scorsese collaborator Graham King, *Allied* marks a rare 'director for hire' endeavour for Zemeckis, who typically develops his own material. Espionage and a full-blown love story are also rare blind spots on Zemeckis' eclectic CV, but the opportunity to try something new wasn't necessarily part of the appeal. "I've never sat around and said, 'I've never done a spy movie,' or, 'I've never done a time-travel movie,'" he says. "I've just looked for something that's compelling."

Compelling it may be, but with superhero movies and any story set in a galaxy far, far away the only sure things in Hollywood nowadays, does Zemeckis believe his film can find an audience? "I find superhero movies incomprehensible," he reveals. "Here's my theory about them: they're familiar. They're like watching someone else play a videogame. The whole gamble with this is: does anyone want to see something completely different?" **JF**

ETA | 25 NOVEMBER / *ALLIED* OPENS NEXT MONTH. READ MORE WITH MARION COTILLARD ON PAGE 74.





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EXCLUSIVE

GONE GIRL

THE UNKNOWN GIRL | The Dardenne brothers take Europe's pulse in a political murder mystery...

From *Rosetta* to *The Kid With A Bike* to the recent Marion Cotillard-starrer *Two Days, One Night*, women have often taken centre stage in films by the Dardenne brothers. "Of course we are attracted to women, whether in the form of actress or character, because they are the ones who fight," smiles the curly haired Jean-Pierre, 65, sitting with his ever-present sibling Luc, 62, when *Teasers* catches up with them in Cannes.

In their latest, *The Unknown Girl*, Adèle Haenel plays Jenny, a young doctor working in Liege who refuses to open her practice after hours when a patient frantically buzzes the intercom. The next day, the woman – an unidentified African immigrant – turns up dead, triggering unassailable guilt in Jenny.

"She's a doctor and, by definition, her profession is to give life to people – to fight

against death and illness," says Luc. "She contradicts all of this when she doesn't open the door."

The event sends Jenny on a mission to uncover the identity of this Jane Doe. "She feels responsible and she acts on it," continues Luc. "She chooses to become accountable. 'OK, I have not opened the door but now I can do something;' and that something is to find out the name of the girl, so as to be able to give her back her life in a way, to reestablish her identity."

It's not the first time the Belgian brothers have examined immigration, tackling the topic in *The Promise* and *The Silence Of Lorna*, but it's a situation that's now even more acute, with the current refugee crisis in Europe.

"It's difficult to say how this situation will evolve," says Jean-Pierre. "Our duty is to give hospitality to these people fleeing their countries but we have to be very realistic and not dream on solutions that we won't be able to implement. The important thing is to respect the dignity of human beings."

The Dardenne brothers are now writing a script about the rise of terrorism in Europe – an equally hot-button topic – which they plan to shoot in Belgium late next year. But they're too modest to believe their films can change things.

"We won't rule the world with a film or impact on the behaviour of mankind," nods Luc. "What we would like to do through our films is to make people ponder on behaviour – human behaviour, moral behaviour, political behaviour. We try to show the complexity of a situation we might find ourselves in." **JM**

ETA | 2 DECEMBER / THE UNKNOWN GIRL OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.



SHORT CUTS

What's stopping, what's starting in movie land...



GAME ON

With filming underway on 2017's reboot/'continuation' of *Jumanji*, here's a first look at the cast. The original boardgame has reportedly been upgraded to a videogame, which four teens get sucked into – Tron-style – before assuming the identities of their avatars, including Dwayne Johnson's Dr. 'Smolder' Bravestone and Karen Gillan's Ruby Roundhouse. Apparently there's a good reason for Gillan's less-than practical costume too...

CURTIS HANSON RIP

L.A. *Confidential* director Curtis Hanson has died at the age of 71. In a 40-year career, the Nevada native assembled an eclectic filmography, from zeitgeist-y thriller *The Hand That Rocks The Cradle* to comedy drama *In Her Shoes* and rap-flick *8 Mile*. His masterpiece remains crime thriller *L.A. Confidential*, which earned Hanson a Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar.

DARK DAYS

The big screen adaptation of Stephen King's *Dark Tower* series will finally arrive in cinemas in a little over four months, and a TV tie-in is already in the works. The 10-13 episode prequel series will fill in gunslinger Roland's backstory, with Idris Elba set to appear in framing scenes.

KING OF THE JUNGLES

Jon Favreau is already hard at work on a sequel to summer smash *The Jungle Book*, and he's also set to helm a live-action version of *The Lion King*. The film was put on the fast track after Fav's *Jungle Book* ended its theatrical run with almost a billion dollars in the bank, and will feature songs from the '94 animation.





BETWEEN TAKES

LENNIE JAMES

THE WALKING DEAD STAR
TALKS LIFE ON SET...

What's the first thing you do on set?

I leave the trailer and get a sense of the layout. I don't bring huge amounts of stuff. I just need some music, the script, and know where I can run to should I need to. After that I'm fine.

Do you have any on set superstitions?

I like to have a hard copy of my sides [lines] for the day. It can be tricky. I just finished *Blade Runner*. I thought no set could be more secretive than *The Walking Dead*, but *Blade Runner* was right up there, to the point where our sides were watermarked and you had to sign them back in at the end of the day so they could be destroyed.

Hot or cold lunch?

It depends how good the caterers are. I'm not particularly good at cooking fish. So what I tend to do, certainly on *The Walking Dead*, is I'll only eat fish, to keep it as light as possible.

Sleep or don't sleep?

Depends how long the break is. Everything moves so fast now.

You rarely get an opportunity to go back to the trailer and sleep. But I don't like sleeping during the day, it throws me off.

Best on-set experience?

I would have to say *Snatch*. There were a lot of laughs, a lot of piss-taking. If you went back to your chair you had to check for drawing pins or crazy glue. And you had to constantly check your phone because there was a fine if your phone went off so [Jason] Statham and Jason Flemyng would constantly flick your phone off silent and call you so you'd get busted and have to put £50 in the box.

Best wrap party?

I know the best wrap party I *didn't* go to: for *24 Hour Party People*. It was a 24-hour party every single day on the set. At the wrap party that whole scene came out when they knew we were doing the wrap party in the mock-up of the Hacienda. I knew it was going to get messy, so I told everybody I was going and just before I went off to

Manchester Piccadilly station and got a train back to London.

Will you be going to the *Blade Runner* wrap party?

If I can. It'll be interesting to see who else is in the film because I didn't really get a sense of it. The nature of the movie is it's Ryan Gosling and Harrison Ford, it's their journey through it, and everybody flies in for a bit. Denis [Villeneuve] is the real deal. Even though it was a short stint I had with him, just 10 or 11 days, I will shoot whoever I need to shoot or sleep with whoever I need to sleep with to get next to him again. *JF*

ETA | 24 OCTOBER / THE WALKING DEAD
SEASON 7 AIRS ON FOX, MONDAYS AT 9PM.
THE UNTITLED BLADE RUNNER SEQUEL
OPENS 6 OCTOBER 2017.

**'I THOUGHT WALKING DEAD
WAS THE MOST SECRETIVE
SET... UNTIL BLADE RUNNER'**



FIRST WORD

KOOKY MONSTER

COLOSSAL | Anne Hathaway controls a city-smashing kaiju with her mind in the latest brain-scambler from Nacho Vigalondo.

Iwould love to tell you a heroic story about how I fought against the elements to get this movie made," *Colossal* director Nacho Vigalondo tells *Teasers*, shortly after the film has premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival. "But to tell you the truth, once Anne Hathaway wants to do your film, it becomes an Anne Hathaway film – even if it's a weird Anne Hathaway film, you're going to shoot it."

And a weird Anne Hathaway movie it is: the pitch has Hathaway's Gloria discover that she's mentally linked to a giant rampaging kaiju in Seoul. After a messy breakup in New York, she has returned to her hometown where she reconnects with old pal Oscar (Jason Sudeikis), and her local park holds the key to her connection to the beast. It's an utterly barmy premise that sees Gloria's life drift on while the big-scale carnage plays out on the other side of the world. Like Vigalondo's previous movies (*Timecrimes*, *Extraterrestrial*), it tramples on genre conventions.

So how did a star like Hathaway get involved, then? "Well, I called my

psychic..." she laughs, before explaining, "I saw [*Ben Wheatley's A Field In England*], and was so transported by it, delighted by it, challenged by it. I just thought, 'I don't remember the last time I read something like that. I want to do movies like that. And I don't think I'm the actress people think of for movies like that, but that's very much where my heart lies.'"

After tearing through the script, Sudeikis met Vigalondo via Skype. "He saw this guy in me, which I guess is a compliment in some ways but then also awful in others," laughs Sudeikis of his barfly slacker character.

STRANGE DAYS
Buddies Oscar (Jason Sudeikis) and Gloria (Anne Hathaway) watch the carnage unfold.

"I was excited to see this movie regardless of my involvement, so to be a part of it is really cool."

Hathaway cuts in. "We've been asked, 'What adjectives would you use to describe this movie?'" She smiles. "We came up with, '*Being John Malkovich-y*'!" Adds Sudeikis: "Which is high praise. That movie is seminal. But I think [*Nacho*] is one of those guys who sees invisible things; it's very neat and playful in that way."

For Vigalondo himself, *Colossal* was an opportunity to marry his love of monster movies with something altogether more personal. "In one way... I want to make a giant monster movie so it's plain love and affection towards those kind of films," he says. "The other half is probably my life, my experiences; the way I deal with other people in my life; the way I question myself; the way I have some fears and regrets. It's an intimate thing. It's a way to keep relating to my experience, while talking about things I love.

So that's probably how I'd describe it." **MM**

ETA | TBC | COLOSSAL PLAYED AT THE TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. IT IS AWAITING A UK RELEASE.





YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

Film quotes pose as questions. Film stars try to cope.

IN THE CROSSHAIRS THIS MONTH: **DOMINIC COOPER**

You talkin' to me?

I am talking to you, I think.
But I'm never sure.

Do you feel lucky, punk?

I love the way you're doing the quotes. [laughs] I need you to do them better! [Eastwood growl] "Do you feel lucky, punk?" I feel very, very lucky, but not with a glint of... what's the word? Smugness. I feel lucky because that TV's on over there and the news has been on and it shows what real life is like everywhere else; we're sitting in a hotel room looking over Hyde Park and talking about films, with you saying quotes badly. [laughs] And I'm really pleased with *Warcraft* and *Preacher*. I have no idea how I've ended up in comic books and videogames, because I was never really into them growing up. So that's exciting.

What's the last thing that you do remember?

Is that *Marathon Man*? [Told it's Memento] Brilliant. [pause] Everything's a haze. The last thing I remember is that bacon sandwich I was eating over there costing £22. And the roll was stale.

You ever have that feeling where you're not sure if you're awake or still dreaming?

Yeah. Life sometimes feels like a dream in the speed with which it's moving. For example, finishing *Preacher*, we were packing up our life from five months in Albuquerque. We finished at one in the morning, went on a plane, and I woke up on a red carpet, talking about the show. It was like, "I don't know whether I'm here, whether we've ended that job, whether I'm starting a new one."

What's your favourite scary movie?

The Shining, without a doubt. And if you re-watch that film, there's so much more. The guy's a genius. I hadn't watched it for a few years and there's



'I'D LIKE TO HAVE MORE TIME TO DO NORMAL THINGS, LIKE BUYING AUBERGINES'

just so much more to it. It's a brilliant, brilliant film. It's terrifying, but it says a lot about America I didn't realise.

If you could change something in your life, anything at all, what would it be?

Toe hair. Definitely toe hair. I want more. [laughs] I'd like to read more. I need to read a book. And play more football. These are crap answers... Oh, I'd like to have a bit more time to be in one location to see friends and family. And just do some normal things, like buying aubergines.

Why so serious?

I'm not. I wish I was. I need to be more. I'm never serious enough. But I have done some serious roles. Some! I'm very straight in *Warcraft*. I just realised, re-watching it yesterday... fucking hell, he makes some shit

WAR DAYS
Dominic Cooper heads into battle in *Warcraft*.



decisions. He's basically the cause of the downfall, isn't he? I went from thinking he was a really good strong leader to thinking, "Oh dear..."

What would you do if you knew you had less than one minute to live?

Everyone knows the answer to that. Come on, don't be stupid. [laughs] What every single human would do, of course! But you haven't given me very long. Under that amount of pressure, I wouldn't even be able to do the thing that I wanted to do most. In a minute, I can't really do anything. Just keel over and die.

I know you can be overwhelmed and I know you can be underwhelmed, but can you be just whelmed?

I spend most of my life just whelmed, I think, sadly. I was very overwhelmed by the sets on *Warcraft*. They were so elaborate and beautifully made and I was fortunate enough to do my work on them. [pause] I was underwhelmed by that bacon sandwich over there.

Does the Archbishop of Canterbury know you talk like this?

No, no. What's that from? [Told it's his own film, The History Boys] Oh shit! Yes, it is! Do I say it? Oh God, I do! I have so many fond memories of that film. Everything about it. We all got on together – a lot of close friendships that stayed together. And working with Richard Griffiths, I'll never ever forget. You could just constantly watch him. He's one of the most magnificent actors I've ever worked with. Yeah, the whole thing was a big milestone in a lot of people's work and lives. It was a really beautiful experience. **JF**

ETA | OUT NOW / *PREACHER* IS OUT ON DVD/BD/DIGITAL. *WARCRAFT* IS OUT ON DVD/BD/3D BD/DIGITAL.



EXCLUSIVE

SPLIT DECISION

A UNITED KINGDOM | Amma Asante tackles the true-life tale of lovers torn apart by global politics.

So many people think, 'There goes Amma again, telling another interracial love story.' But to me, any old interracial love story isn't necessarily that interesting." As the director of 2013's racially charged period romance *Belle*, Amma Asante knows what she's talking about. So what makes the story of real-life love birds Ruth Williams (Rosamund Pike) and Seretse Khama (David Oyelowo) the stuff of movies? For one, Seretse was the king of Botswana. "One simple thing created so many complexities around it. And they weren't just family complexities; they became world complexities."

When Seretse took his London office worker wife back to Bechuanaland (as it was known), to be his queen in 1947, he could never have predicted the turmoil an act of love would cause. Apartheid, white supremacy, African independence and the British Empire's tenuous control over the African protectorate all conspired to drive the two apart.

"It's not very often you come across a real story that has the intimate microcosm, and then the elements of social justice and equality in politics, at the same time," Asante says. A Brit raised by African parents, Asante describes herself as "firmly entrenched in all of the ideals and the points of view of this film".

But it was Oyelowo who brought the Khamas' story to Asante's attention. "I worked with David 18 years ago for the first thing I produced for TV. It was his first TV job out of drama school. So it felt like we'd come full circle."

Having played at Toronto and opened the London Film Festival, Asante's film is riding a high that could translate into awards glory come the new year, while her next project – the decade-in-the-making *Where Hands Touch* – recently added George MacKay to the cast and will tackle another interracial romance, this time in Nazi Germany.

"When I first tried to get this movie off the ground I struggled because there had been no *Belle*, no *12 Years A Slave*, no *Butler*," Asante says. "It's incumbent upon all of us to take this seriously; for audiences to support movies made by talent from diverse quarters, and for none of us to get comfortable. We need to keep pushing." **JF**

ETA | 25 NOVEMBER / A UNITED KINGDOM OPENS NEXT MONTH.

MAKING HISTORY
Seretse Khama
(David Oyelowo)
weds Ruth
(Rosamund Pike).



Q&A
ROSAMUND PIKE

What appealed to you about playing Ruth?

I loved the story so much. I find it inspiring to be those people. There's that wonderful appetite to seize life that people had right after the war, especially women. Ruth had driven an ambulance. I think it gave her this eye that you could do bigger things with your life. And the way she went into that love affair so openly, without any anxiety or negativity – I love that.

Were you able to relate to Ruth personally?

I was. One of my grandmothers was actually born in Blackheath, where Ruth came from. So I felt quite connected to the place she'd come from. And then my other granny had worked in radar in Scotland during the war. The responsibilities given to young women during those awful times were really profound and affected them for the rest of their lives. Ruth didn't start out as a political reformer, but you see this girl become a stateswoman.

What was it like to shoot on location in Botswana?

It was a gift, because the story is in the soil there. We actually shot in their house. But when the production designer said "we found a house", David and I didn't realise they found the house, and it was being lived in by a homeless person. He'd actually burned a hole through the floor. So production rehoused him, and put the house back together. Now it will stay as part of the national museum. **JF**





EXCLUSIVE

BORN TO BE BAD

DOG EAT DOG | Nic Cage and Willem Dafoe go crazy in Paul Schrader's bonkers crime movie...

After his last movie, *Dying Of The Light*, was wrestled off him and re-cut by the studio, writer/director Paul Schrader felt depressed. How, aged 70, could he recharge his batteries? By re-teaming with *Dying Of The Light* star Nicolas Cage, roping in Cage's *Wild At Heart* co-star Willem Dafoe, and corralling a young, hungry crew to make *Dog Eat Dog*, a no-budget, break-all-the-rules crime film about a botched kidnapping scam.

"It was enormously reinvigorating," Schrader says at the Cannes Film Festival, where *Dog Eat Dog* premiered to rousing applause. "We'd change things on set. I didn't have to ask permission. On the last day of shooting, Nic started doing Humphrey Bogart! I thought, 'Wow, that's kind of bold - we'll find out later if it was the right decision!'" Cage and Dafoe were also jazzed by the experience. Here they tell *Teasers* why playing bad feels so good...

How did *Dog Eat Dog* blip on to your radars?

NICOLAS CAGE: Paul called me and

offered me the character of Mad Dog. I'd just played a maniacal character and said, "I just don't have the energy for that level of mania - can I play Troy?" And that opened the door for the Mad Dog character to go to Willem. **WILLEM DAFOE:** It's fun because the scenes are really dark but also funny. And to work with Nic again was wonderful. We've both played a lot of bad guys over the years. Physiology has something to do with it - if you're not conventionally

LOOSE CANNONS
Nicolas Cage and Willem Dafoe play ex-cons hired to kidnap a baby.

handsome, y'know? The most interesting roles are bad guys. You connect with something primal.

You've both played many memorable villains...

NC: There's a reckless energy in both of us, so maybe people believe we could do something that we might regret. [grins] I think people watch the Bad Guy and tap into some of their fantasies - stuff they'd never do for social reasons.

WD: We're all conditioned through fear to walk the line; it's a social necessity. For example, I remember my father, who was a surgeon, hard-working, went to church, alcohol never touched his lips, married to the same woman for many years, eight kids... and he'd always say, "I love that movie where you play the rapist." He was talking about *Wild At Heart*. I was like, "Whoa!"

When you go really crazy, how much of it is pre-planned, how much spontaneous?

NC: Some of it is



FIGHT OR FLIGHT

The guys' plan isn't necessarily foolproof.



designed, some is spontaneous. It's like music. I'll say, "I've got that, now let's do a few bars that are out of control." It can be a lightning flash.

WD: I can't help myself. I get so excited. And it's like metal: once you heat it up, you can bend it; and if you don't heat it up, it's gonna be straight.

Who are your favourite screen villains of all time?

NC: Bogart in *Petrified Forest*; I love Cagney in *Public Enemy*; I love Al in *Scarface*; Jack in *The Shining*.

WD: I like actors who disappear. Guys who are unassuming, almost like non-actors. Warren Oates, for example.

He said, "Nicster, it's not only OK for you to have fun, it's necessary." After that I started to lighten up. I realised I could rely on my imagination. It's so much fun to watch Willem approach characters. There's a glee...

WD: I'm an idiot!

NC: I'm a fan. He gets embarrassed, but he's one of the only actors I'll watch over and over. He's an uncompromising artist.

Is it hard to leave the characters behind and return to yourselves?

NC: [Ponders] The mystic swims in the same waters that the psychotic drowns in. I can make the same argument for

'THE MYSTIC SWIMS IN THE SAME WATERS THE PSYCHOTIC DROWNS IN' NICOLAS CAGE

You see him on screen and you see humanity, not acting.

NC: Truth be told, when I started, I was all caught up in that whole method thing that was happening after *Raging Bull*. I had to live the part. My uncle [Francis Ford Coppola] cast me in *The Cotton Club* and gave me the most crazy character, Mad Dog.

WD: Fuck, I forgot he was called Mad Dog...

NC: Everybody hated me! I went out to Bleeker Street in the Village and some guy was selling remote-control cars and I bought one and I jumped on it and I smashed it... *Wild At Heart* was an epiphany. I said to David [Lynch], "Is it OK to have fun making a movie?"

an actor. He can go sideways, zig instead of zag. He can almost cleanse himself through that process of expression.

WD: It's the same with filmmakers. I'm friends with Paul having worked with him six times now. He was depressed with the state of film. He was hard to be around because he was always saying negative things. So to see him come back strong on *Dog Eat Dog* by embracing a new idea – working with a very young crew, with limited resources – was so exciting. He knew he could make the film he wanted. **JG**

ETA | 11 NOVEMBER / DOG EAT DOG OPENS NEXT MONTH.

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MY MOVIE LIFE

The films that make **Jared Harris** fearful, tearful and green with envy



THE FIRST MOVIE I EVER SAW

I remember we used to have a Super 8 camera and it came with these films that were edited down. I'd watch **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS**, *The Beast With Five Fingers* and some crazy story about a guy who turns into a half-lizard man who's running from the police in California... And I remember going to see *Abbott And Costello Meet Frankenstein* and being terrified of this chest that was in my mother's dressing room that I had to walk past to go to bed; I was sure the mummy was going to pop out at me.



THE FILM THAT ALWAYS MAKES ME CRY

Boys Town, the Spencer Tracy movie. Or *My Favorite Year* – that always gets me, I guess because it reminds me of my dad. I'm a bit of a weepie, particularly on planes. Planes always get me. I remember sitting and watching **LEGALLY BLONDE 2** with tears running down my face and going, "What the hell is wrong with me? What the fuck is in this drink?" Ridiculous stuff like that. What else? Gérard Depardieu's Cyrano de Bergerac. *Schindler's List* always gets me as well, it's so powerful.



THE FILM THAT SCARES ME MOST

I saw *Night Of The Living Dead* far too young and couldn't sleep for the next five years. But now it's **THE EXORCIST**. That last sequence is emblematic of what's changed in storytelling. The climax of that movie is a girl hovering four feet above the bed, and two priests saying over and over again, "The power of Christ compels you!" It's a battle of wills, and it's fucking riveting. Of course, if you're remaking that now, the gates of hell would open, and there'd be a battle between demons and angels over the bed.



THE MOVIE I WISH I WAS IN

Many, gosh. I have, since seven or eight years old, been fascinated with Greek history and Greek civilisation, so **300**. That whole Battle of Thermopylae; that was a story that my elder brother and I – he's a director – wrote a script for and were trying to get going. I enjoyed [*Zack Snyder's film*]. I was watching it, going, "Why the fuck aren't I in this movie?" [laughs] Also *Austin Powers*. My younger brother and I went to go and see the first movie before it became popular and were like, "Why the fuck aren't we in this movie?"



THE FILM I LOVE THAT NOBODY TALKS ABOUT

I was talking to somebody about remaking **ODD MAN OUT**, with James Mason. He's an IRA gangster. They do this bank robbery, and it goes wrong, and he gets shot. He goes on the lam, and he's trying to make his way back home through the city. He kind of goes through this very weird picaresque journey. Basically, he's dying. There's some wonderful, crazy bits where he ends up with a painter who's like, "I've finally found a subject!" Because he recognises that the guy's dying.



THE LAST SHOW I BINGED

I binge-watched **THE WIRE** until I had that last disc left. I couldn't bear the idea that there were no more left, so I waited six weeks before I put the last one on. Binge-watching is a new business model, but part of the interaction between the narrative and the audience is, if they have to wait for the next instalment, they start to experience it in their mind and their imagination. **JF**

ETA | 4 NOVEMBER / THE CROWN STREAMS ON NETFLIX NEXT MONTH. ALLIED OPENS 25 NOVEMBER.

LISTEN UP

HOLLYWOOD

This month, *Teasers* pitches four ideas for Jeff Nichols' remake of '80s cult classic *Alien Nation*.

ALIEN TERMINATION

Buddy cop duo Sykes and 'Newcomer' alien Francisco arrive from the future to prevent a cyborg from killing the mother of the leader of the resistance, but their constant bickering about Francisco's galactic customs leaves the T-800 to scratch its metal head and get on with its deadly mission.

ALIEN CLAYMATION

Aardman Animations makes *Sykes & Francisco: The Wrong Trousers*. When a case leads the detectives to a narcotics deal, they discover the drug is Wensleydale cheese, and it has a powerful effect on Sykes. But who is the criminal mastermind? New penguin friend Feathers McGraw helps investigate.

101 ALIEN DALMATIANS

Sykes and Francisco's police dogs partner up, only to produce a litter of puppies, all of them half ET thanks to Francisco's space canine. As the pair struggle with their pups, police chief Cruella de Vil plots to make a coat from their lethal, radioactive slime-skin.

ALIEN LOCATION LOCATION

'Newcomer' Francisco enlists the help of Phil and Kirsty to find a flat close to his alien buds, but within easy commuting distance from the police station. Sykes, who is dragged along on the mission, spends the whole time debating the importance of kerb appeal. **MLo**





INDIE SPOTLIGHT

CARRY ON CAMPUS

INDIGNATION | Sex, war and religion – all on this year's curriculum in James Schamus' drama...

A 1950s-set tale about a young Jewish atheist who arrives at an Ohio college to clash with his peers and pedagogues, *Indignation* might not sound very contemporary, right? Think again. "You've got this rise of American jingoism, you've got this slut-shame culture, and you've got these crazy overseas wars... so, of course, this has *nothing* to do with America in 2016," says writer-director James Schamus, with just a hint of sarcasm.

With Logan Lerman playing Marcus, the aforementioned straight-A student whose good grades allow him to avoid the Korean War amid McCarthy-era xenophobia, *Indignation* touches on all of the above. "It's bizarre! It's exactly now!" exclaims Schamus, the Oscar-nominated writer-producer (*Brokeback Mountain*) making his directorial debut with this adap of Philip Roth's novel.

Take Marcus' relationship with student Olivia (Sarah Gadon), who has earned the on-campus nickname 'Blowjob Queen of 1951'. Schamus, who also teaches film history/theory at Columbia, screened the movie to his students and was pleased to discover they "totally identified" with it.

Reportedly inspired by Roth's own experiences, the film's stand-out moment comes with a 15-minute exchange between the college dean

(Tracy Letts) and Marcus as he rejects the mandatory chapel attendance.

"That centrepiece [was] what made me want to do this film," says Lerman. "It also made me want to drop out several times; I was afraid I couldn't do it."

Lerman wasn't the only one bricking it. Despite all his experience, Schamus trembled going behind the camera for the first time. "It turns out, that's kind of terrifying," he admits. "The screen is a white blank. I felt this existential dread, trying to figure out, 'What exactly is the frame?'" Fears were overcome, though: "I just thought, 'It's just a great job. This directing thing is really fun.'" **JM**

ETA | 18 NOVEMBER / INDIGNATION OPENS NEXT MONTH AND SCREENS AT THE JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL ON 5 NOVEMBER.

YOUNG LOVE
Sarah Gadon and Logan Lerman play 1950s students.



Q&A
SARAH GADON

What intrigued you about playing Olivia?

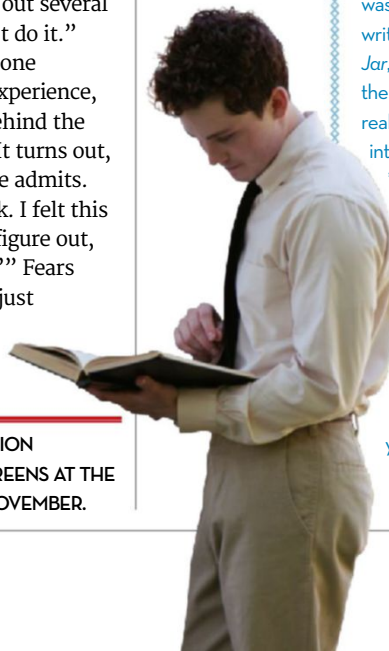
I think the complexity of the character. On the surface, she seems like this object of desire, but underneath, she's struggling to fit in, bumping up against the ideologies of the time. I really liked that she was this outsider; she's kind of smarter than her environment. She's smarter than people take her for at face value.

How did you research the role?

James [Schamus] really felt like Philip Roth was inspired by Sylvia Plath, when he was writing Olivia Hutton. So I re-read the *The Bell Jar*, I re-read a lot of her poetry, and then for the first time, I read her journals, which were really insightful because they bring you right into the psyche of a college student in the '50s. He even wanted me to write like Sylvia Plath, so I spent a lot of time copying her handwriting.

Olivia is very closed off. Did you isolate yourself a little bit?

I kind of naturally isolate myself when I'm working on a film. It's such an intense schedule, and you're away from home, and you're working with people in such a close proximity that you kind of do create your own world. So I think I did that. **JM**





CAN WE TALK ABOUT...?

THE WITCH IN BLAIR WITCH

Was it wise to actually show the big bad in the found-footage sequel?

SPOILER
ALERT!

Back in 1999, *The Blair Witch Project* sent a trio of student documentary filmmakers into the Black Hills Forest, near Burkittsville, Maryland, to search for the legendary Blair Witch. They never found her. Well, perhaps they did – or at least she perhaps found them – but we can't be sure: the terrifying goings-on might have been the work of their spooked imaginations, or nasty locals.

This year's sequel, written by Simon Barrett and directed by Adam Wingard, opts to give viewers the money shot in the closing stages. The reveals are little more than haunting glimpses that comprise just a few seconds of an extendedly frantic, see-sawing finale set in the derelict house that Heather and Mike discovered all those years ago, but the decision by the regular writing and directing double-act is huge.

For starters, what we can imagine is always more potent than what we can see, so to render our darkest reverie is a tremendous risk – it is to the film's credit that the bony, hairless, elongated figure we're presented with is a chilling creation. Of even greater import, though, is that this show-and-tell flourish represents an unabashed embracing of the supernatural.

Where *The Blair Witch Project* gave us shadows, screams and suggestion, *Blair Witch* gives us concrete answers: first an eternal night falls, then one of the protagonists snaps in two when a stick-figure is broken in half, and finally we see a witch (though crucially not *the* Blair Witch, who is never seen on screen according to Barrett) skulking around the house in all her spindly glory.

To be fair to Barrett and Wingard, they had to do something to move things on. As it is they've been accused of following in the original's footsteps too closely. But by offering up definitive answers, they're shining a light on where to look, where before there was terrifying darkness all about. **JG**

'WHAT WE IMAGINE IS ALWAYS MORE POTENT THAN WHAT WE CAN SEE'



TEASER



ON SET

XXXMAS-RATED

BAD SANTA 2 | Can Billy Bob Thornton recreate the magic of the rude Christmas classic?

It's more profane in some ways but it also has more of a heart," Billy Bob Thornton tells *Teasers* on the bitterly cold Montreal set of seasonal sequel *Bad Santa 2*, where he's just finished berating a receptionist (as part of a scene, of course – we haven't just walked in on an angry outburst). Yep, he's returning to the naughty St. Nick role he originated more than a decade ago in the surprise comedy hit that's become a festive mainstay for anyone with a coal-black sense of humour.

"The first movie has become kind of iconic, you know," continues Thornton. "Like people watch *It's A Wonderful Life* and *Miracle On 34th Street* and *Bad Santa* – it's like a boxset! So it's really good to do this, and it's been 14 years and we just kind of stepped into it [and] it fit like a glove." Picking up with Thornton's Willie Stokes as he gets drawn into another Crimbo crime, *BS2* reunites Thornton with the likes of Tony Cox and Brett Kelly (the 22-year-old gained 40 pounds to reprise the role of Thurman Merman). Also in the mix this time are Christina Hendricks and Kathy Bates, who plays Sunny, Willie's mother (proving the bauble doesn't fall far from the Christmas tree).

"My character is this sort of reformed do-gooder," Hendricks explains. "She's a recovering alcoholic who has decided to work for this charity and help the homeless and of course when she meets Billy's character she thinks she can maybe help him out so it's one of her good deeds gone wrong," she laughs. Hendricks hadn't seen the original before landing this gig, but Bates (who's only seven years Thornton's senior), was a fan. "I saw it years ago, and then quite by accident I saw it maybe a year ago before I knew all of this was happening and it's hysterical," she recalls. "Very simple,

but I thought it was wonderful, heart-warming and laugh out loud."

This time round, Mark Waters (*Mean Girls*) takes the directorial reins from Terry Zigoff. Waters explains the appeal between takes, "The script has this aspect to it where even though it's kind of a complete anti-Christmas movie, it's also sneakily a Christmas movie and has all this heart to it with this relationship between Thurman and Willie." Filming quickly to keep the comedy nimble, Waters allows Thornton to play with a couple of variations and adlibs after nailing the first take.

The sequel has been a long time coming, in part due to the studio handovers, script rewrites and scheduling conflicts, and Thornton's aware of the difficulty of trying to get lightning to strike twice. "I think if you make the same movie again then that's not the best thing to do. Especially with a comedy, they'll have Part 3 and 4 and 5 and they're all basically the same movie!" he laughs. "You have to make the same movie because the audience wants it and yet you have to make a different movie too all at once. It's a very thin line to walk, you know, and I think that [has] happened." *MM/JCC*

ETA | 25 NOVEMBER / *BAD SANTA 2* OPENS NEXT MONTH.



FIRST WORD

SCREAMING ON DEMAND

Shudder VOD
for horror buffs...

AMC Networks launches Shudder in the UK this month. It varies from similar Subscription Video On Demand services with its expert curation by Colin Geddes (from the Toronto International Film Festival's Midnight Madness thread) and Sam Zimmerman (former editor of *Fangoria*). "When you go onto Shudder, it's akin to going to a video store and seeing a staff recommendation shelf," Geddes tells *Teasers*. "We're two dummies at the counter going: 'Watch these, dude!'" adds Zimmerman.

Available via a website as well as iOS and Android apps, Apple TV and Roku, Shudder will cost £4.99 a month, and launches with around 250 titles in the UK, with more to be added soon. "AMC set out to set up Shudder and solve one of the biggest problems with the glut and onslaught of online streaming content with curation," explains Geddes. "How many times have you sat down onto one of the streaming services and got browsing fatigue?"

Geddes and Zimmerman are hoping it'll satisfy a hungry horde seeking undiscovered curios and fresh thrills that will become new favourites. "It's almost like loving punk bands," muses Zimmerman. "If they start to get a little bigger, you're like: 'That's my fucking band!' I think horror's like that in a way. It's yours!" **MM**

ETA | OCTOBER / SHUDDER IS LAUNCHING IN THE UK THIS MONTH.



FUNNY PEOPLE

Comedy heroes on what makes them laugh.
This month: **Bob Odenkirk**



MY COMEDY PRESENT

Comedy is supremely important in **BETTER CALL SAUL**. They leave all the humour in the show, and there are scenes that are pure comedy sprinkled throughout. As much as I love the challenge of the intense dramatic scenes written for me, the comedy is just a breather, and there's a comfort level that I have with it that's a great reward and a great joy that keeps me going when we're shooting the show. If it was all bleak drama, all interior struggle – as so much of it is – I think I would have a heart attack. I'd die.



MY COMEDY HERO(ES)

MONTY PYTHON was a pretty massive influence on me. *Mr. Show* was just our version, the best we could do, of feeling the vibe and approach of Monty Python. But not trying to do a tribute or parody or anything. We looked at things and approached things in the way they approached it. There's a couple of others. Bob and Ray, and The Credibility Gap, which you may not know about. They were a radio comedy team in America. Extremely funny, subtle and dry. You could say they were like the Python of America.



MY COMEDY PAST

I feel very rewarded and successful with the comedy I've done that I've written, but I'm most proud of **MR. SHOW**. Yeah, *Mr. Show* was pure me and pure David [Cross]. We were fully successful in doing many of those sketches. And it's still very rewarding for me to think about and occasionally see. And that includes the show *With Bob And David* that we did only a year-and-a-half ago for Netflix, which is a reunion of the writers and actors from *Mr. Show*. That feels like the most fully 'my voice' and rewarding version of whatever talents I may have.



MY FAVOURITE FUNNY SHOW

The funny thing is, I'm talking to you in the UK and my favourite TV show of all time is **THE ROYLE FAMILY**. And of course, in America, nobody knows it. What I love about it is the way they rely on each other and enable each other's faults. If you watch a few episodes, you start to feel all their psychological underpinnings and the faulty, emotionally immature family dynamic. It's really well thought out and well considered and well played, and never really declared in an obvious, loud, overt way. Plus, it's funny as shit.



MY FAVOURITE FUNNY MOVIE

I've got to say **ZELIG**. It's really well-executed, just incredibly winning and complete. A lot of people don't know *Zelig*. It feels like a sketch taken to film-length, but done with such a light touch. It's filled with so much comedy – pure, hilarious comedy that makes you laugh out loud. Not minor-key shit. I'm a huge fan of Woody Allen. It's hard to only put one of his films on my favourites list. A lot of people don't mention *Stardust Memories*. I think it's great even though people accused him of being pompous.



MY FUNNIEST CO-STAR

CHRIS FARLEY (*Tommy Boy*, *Beverly Hills Ninja*), who I did some things with at Second City, was the funniest person I ever worked with. Just pure funny all the time and delightful. But David Cross (*Arrested Development*, *Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind*) is the funniest person I work with still. He is clever, funny, smart, angry – all the things I love. **JF**

ETA | 14 NOVEMBER / BETTER CALL SAUL SEASON 2 IS RELEASED ON DVD AND BLU-RAY NEXT MONTH.

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THE NEXT BIG THING

JOE ALWYN
IS GUNNING FOR GOLD...

He hadn't even graduated from drama school when Ang Lee (*Life Of Pi*, *Brokeback Mountain*) signed him up to lead war drama Billy Lynn's *Long Halftime Walk*, and now 25-year-old Joe Alwyn is Oscar-tipped with his star-making turn as a war vet heralded a hero on home turf. With book adap *The Sense Of An Ending* also in the can, Alwyn's primed to turn heads. "There's a strange parallel between me and Billy," muses the Londoner. "We're both thrown into an environment we've never been in..."

Was it quite intimidating meeting Ang Lee straight out of drama school?

It was definitely overwhelming at times, but the audition period happened so quickly I didn't have time to get nervous. I just had to jump in. It really was a baptism by fire! When we got to filming there were definitely moments, especially in the first few weeks, when it was scary.

He's directed five actors to Oscar nods. Is that something you can think about?

No, it's not. I'm just lucky to have worked with him and that's the most important thing to me. It's surreal. I really don't know how those things [awards] work. It's an unusual start and doesn't happen a lot to many people, so I feel very lucky that Ang had the courage to choose me.

Was it good to have people like Kristen Stewart, as your on-screen sister, around to give advice?

Yeah, it was great to go into an environment where everyone was so experienced. I just asked questions and soaked it up. Kristen was great; she was incredibly supportive and generous as an actress. I didn't really talk to her about the other side of it all, though.

After this you've got *Sense Of An Ending*...

Yeah, we did that last September. The film's split into present day and the 1960s, and it's about what Jim Broadbent's character remembers from his past, so I play Adam, his best friend in his younger years. It was a completely different world, suddenly being back and making a film in London. I just want to keep working with great directors and do projects I feel passionate about. *JW*

ETA | 6 JANUARY 2017 / BILLY LYNN'S LONG HALFTIME WALK OPENS NEXT YEAR. THE SENSE OF AN ENDING OPENS IN MARCH 2017.





FIRST WORD

POP IDOL

GIMME DANGER | Jim Jarmusch chronicles the crazy journey of Iggy Pop and The Stooges...

I do not like documentaries that dig into people's private shit," says Jim Jarmusch between big, wet coughs. He's in Cannes to promote the premiere of his powerhouse documentary *Gimme Danger*, about Michigan band The Stooges, fronted by Iggy Pop, and chooses to bump elbows rather than shake hands for fear of spreading germs.

"I think it's insulting and rude and uninteresting," he adds. "I saw a film about Kurt Cobain, *Montage Of Heck*, and I'll say it out loud: that is a piece of shit. You take things he did privately and capitalise on it, exploit it... I say, 'Fuck you.' You should respect Amy Winehouse. I don't want to go into her shit. Leave that to tabloid garbage. I'm sorry, I get very emotional about this..."

Clearly. But while Jarmusch's first muso-doc since his Neil Young concert film *Year Of The Horse* in 1997 is an unapologetic "love letter to The Stooges", it's also raw and riveting. Jarmusch grew up playing the band's proto-punk in his bedroom

in Acton, Ohio, and here focuses on their forming in 1967, their incendiary self-titled debut album and its dynamite follow-up *Fun House*, their implosion from drugs and exhaustion in 1971 and reconstitution for the influential *Raw Power* album in 1973, and their disbanding in 1974. It then jumps to their long-awaited reunion in 2003.

"There was not much footage but we found stuff that nobody's seen before," says Jarmusch. "We rummaged deep. It was a long haul. We started making this seven years ago." The electrifying archival footage is spliced with talking heads of the band – Pop, as you'd expect, makes for an

especially lively raconteur – and the result is a fast 'n' furious thrill ride for fans and newcomers alike. "The Stooges are a predecessor to punk rock," he continues. "I don't think the punk spirit is destructive. The pose is; it's necessary to say, 'I don't believe in this shit, let's tear it down.' But it's about finding someone who likes something that you do too. And that's not destructive. Singing about destroying is maybe healthy. Whenever I saw them live, I'd leave and for several days feel high, uplifted."

Gimme Danger is clearly a personal project for the hipster helmer ("I discovered them with my friends; we were kind of wild and it was speaking to us") but will invigorate all. "It's a little window on something incredible," he grins. **JG**

ETA | 18 NOVEMBER / *GIMME DANGER* OPENS NEXT MONTH.

TOTAL FILM TOP 10

TF's ever-evolving 2016 movie league table...

01 CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR

02 ROOM



03 CREED

It's been nine months since this came out and there are still tears at *Total Film Towers* whenever we think of Rocky shambling up those steps...

04 SON OF SAUL



05 AMERICAN HONEY

This new entry sees Shia LaBeouf prove he's the real deal in Andrea Arnold's ode to young Americans scamming and partying their way across the Midwest.

06 DEADPOOL

07 SPOTLIGHT

08 SING STREET

09 MIDNIGHT SPECIAL



10 UNDER THE SHADOW

Another new entry! There are genuine scares, and plenty of 'em, in this haunted house story set in war-torn Tehran in the late '80s.

FIRST WORD

READY TO LAUNCH

HIDDEN FIGURES | The unsung heroes of NASA's '60s Space Race take centre stage.

It's so important, right?" beams a teary-eyed Taraji P. Henson. *Teasers* is at the Toronto International Film Festival, and Henson and her co-stars have just presented a first look at some key scenes from *Hidden Figures*, the story of the African-American mathematicians who were instrumental in the efforts to get astronaut John Glenn safely into orbit (and back to Earth in one piece).

Henson plays Katherine Johnson, a maths savant who joined NASA in the '50s, smashing boundaries of gender and race with her achievements alongside Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe). "We were crying back there," admits Monáe after the footage, which demonstrated an often funny tone despite the heavyweight subject matter.

Coming the year after the #OscarsSoWhite controversy, the little-known story of African-American trailblazers couldn't come at a better time, and it's clearly an emotional topic for the cast. "As we know, no women – not black or white – were mentioned in *Apollo 13*," says Spencer, before adding with a mumble, "or any of those other movies. So I'm sad that Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson won't see this film, but I'm excited that Katherine Johnson will."

Johnson, at 98 years old, is still continuing to inspire. Pharrell Williams – who's producing, as well as providing original music for the soundtrack – is a self-confessed space geek, and recalls first hearing about the project. "It's three African-American women. Math. Science. NASA and space. And my hometown, Hampton, Virginia. So for me, it was like, 'Man, we beg! We *have* to be a part of this.'"
Williams' songs are just one of the many elements of the film that will be jostling for awards attention, but for now, the cast aren't burdening themselves with those predictions. "I want Katherine to be proud of her story," says Henson. "That's all I care about." **MM**

ETA | 24 FEBRUARY / HIDDEN FIGURES OPENS NEXT YEAR.

RIGHT

Taraji P. Henson plays Katherine Johnson, a human computer at NASA's Langley Research Centre.

BELOW RIGHT

Kevin Costner takes charge as fictional NASA manager Al Harrison.

BELOW

Octavia Spencer, Henson and Janelle Monáe as the trio of '60s mathletes.





Q&A TARAJI P. HENSON

Did you know anything about Katherine Jackson before this project?

No, I knew nothing about her or any of the wonderful women that worked at NASA. I just thought it was all run by men. [laughs] From all the footage I've seen, I didn't even know women existed in NASA.

What drew you to playing her?

I was just appalled that we didn't know anything about these women. Not just the black women, but women – period. And I felt a strong connection, like this fell into my lap for a reason. It's important that this story is told. And then secondly, once I started reading about her, I couldn't stop. I was like: "This story has to be told. We have to save these children because right now, with the way social media is going, we're not giving them anything to aspire to be – with strippers and twerkers or get rich quick on Instagram."

What was it like meeting Katherine?

I was just in awe. I felt like I was in the presence of greatness. There's something very regal about her, even still to this day. She's very humble. She doesn't take the credit for it all. She always says 'we...' 'it was all of us.' *MM*



INDIE SPOTLIGHT

POETRY IN MOTION

NERUDA | Gael García Bernal gets Nobel in Chilean political drama...

Biopics became so boring,” sighs Pablo Larraín. “Sometimes biopics are so obsessed with making the actor or actress into looking like that person, talk like that person, sing like that person... they do it so well, and then where’s the movie?” The Chilean director knows what he’s talking about. His forthcoming *Jackie* – dealing with the aftermath to President John F. Kennedy’s assassination from the viewpoint of his widow – has been getting rave reviews since its Venice premiere in September.

In the meantime, he has the equally acclaimed *Neruda*. Starring comic actor Luis Gnecco as the titular Nobel Prize-winning poet and politician, the director admits the Chilean-born Pablo Neruda was almost impossible to boil down bio-style. “You can’t put him in a box,” he says. “You can’t put him in one, two, three movies – forget it. It’s like water. You cannot contain him. He’s ‘ungrabbable’. Someone who has such a cosmic vision and such a stature, you’d never be able to do that.”

Set in the late 1940s, as Neruda joins the Communist Party and becomes a fugitive in his own country, Larraín called on Gael García Bernal, star of his 2012 Oscar-nominated movie *No*, to play the (fictional) police inspector hunting him down. Having previously played Che Guevara in *The Motorcycle Diaries*, Bernal has an understanding of

such characters. “Neruda’s voice,” he says, “Neruda’s words gave voice to popular demand – which was the end of injustice and inequality.”

While becoming this voice of the people came through his writing, Larraín took the decision to avoid Neruda’s famous love poems, such as ‘If You Forget Me’. Instead, he took lesser-known works from 1950’s *Canto General*. “Those poems were the ones I was more attracted to,” he says, “[the ones] made of rage and fury. Those are the poems that were shaping a country.” But even these didn’t fully unlock the enigma that was Neruda. “You never really knew who he was. Once the door’s closed, you never know what happens inside.” **JM**

ETA | 9 DECEMBER / NERUDA OPENS LATER THIS YEAR.

MAKING TRACKS
Gael García Bernal and Diego Muñoz saddle up as cops on Neruda’s trail.



Q&A
Gael García Bernal

Are you surprised *Neruda* feels so relevant to today, especially in Latin America?

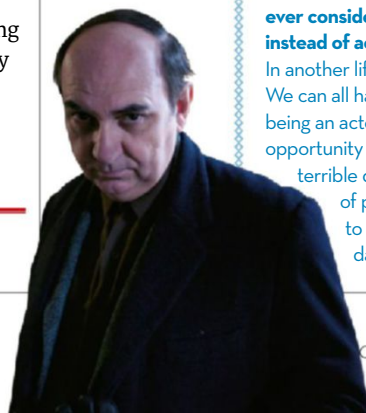
No, I’m not surprised at all. On the contrary, I feel like, “Fuck, yeah!” It is relevant, of course. If we go back to the moment where the film is set, it was immediately after the Second World War and at that point, the Communists had won the war. There was something very alive about all this, but also practical. It was working!

Are there any recent politicians who have impressed you in the way Neruda did?

There are very few politicians I can think about in recent history – Václav Havel, of course. Marcos in Mexico. I’m trying to think... Remember [British Labour politician] Robin Cook, the one that died? He had something going on, in the poetical sense.

In another life, would you have ever considered going in to politics instead of acting?

In another life? No, I do it in this one! We can all have a multiplicity of lives and being an actor is a bit like that. There is an opportunity that we can all take, to ask the terrible questions within the framework of politics. I think we can. We need to instigate that and also obtain dangerous answers. **JM**



SPOILER
ALERT!

IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A FILM JOURNALIST

Editor-at-Large JAMIE GRAHAM
lifts the lid on film journalism.

THIS MONTH MOVIES THAT MAKE ME CRY

Sitting in the cinema watching the nasty macho men capture big, green, canine-with-wings Elliot and chain him to the bed of a truck, I felt a rare sensation: a teardrop squeezing from the corner of my eye. And so *Pete's Dragon* became only the ninth film in the 121-year history of cinema to make me cry.

It was just the single tear, accompanied by a hot, aching throat, but how I welcomed it and willed more to follow. I'm envious, you see, of the many people who routinely sob at movies, their emotional wiring intact and their systems given a regular flush. I know from the few movies that *have* made me blub that it forms a special bond between you and the film, and even as a boy growing up in the Neanderthal '80s, I hated all of that bloke-y bullshit that meant boys were expected to tamp down emotions.

ALIEN FEELING

But while I would not be embarrassed to weep and wail in front of my industry colleagues at every other press screening, I do cringe at the list of films that have actually succeeded in turning my rusty taps.

The first was *E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial*, the exact moment being when the intergalactic turd is discovered pale and cold and face down in the river. No shame in that, right? Jeez, any kid who *doesn't* sob at that scene can probably be found at the bottom of the garden, torturing pets. But the next, viewed 18 years later, was *My Dog Skip*, at the

Man's best friend
is the master of
tweaking those
tear ducts.



snippet of voiceover that reads out a letter informing the film's hero, now grown up and gone to college, that Skip, his trusty Jack Russell terrier, has died. It's intoned matter-of-factly and almost as a P.S., which only added to my grief – I remained stricken in my seat while the lights came up and every other journalist left to write up their two-star reviews.

Next was a viewing of Robert Bresson's *Au Hasard Balthazar* on DVD, when the donkey, which has been mistreated for most of his life, lies quietly down in a field full of

sheep to die. And then came a weird Pocahontas double-punch: the eponymous Native American (Q'orianka Kilcher) twirling in her gown at the end of Terrence Malick's *The New World*, fettered yet free, and some scene, I don't remember which, in Disney's dire 1995 'toon. Yes, I have sat through *Million Dollar Baby*, *Sophie's Choice* and *12 Years A Slave* without shedding a tear, but this D-grade Disney wrung me dry. Perhaps the fact it is animated helped me regress to my childhood? But if that's the case, then why not *The Iron Giant*, *Toy Story 3* or *Up*?

MARLEY AND HACHI

The seventh movie to make me cry was *The Notebook*: manipulative, mushy and unbearably moving. The final two, meanwhile, again tapped into my weakness for animals – especially dogs – shuffling off their mortal coils. One, FFS, was *Marley And Me*, when Owen Wilson holds Marley's big dopey head in his hands and tells him that he's been a good dog before the vet puts him to sleep. The other was Lasse Hallström's *Hachi: A Dog's Tale*, which started me sniffing halfway through and just kept on ratcheting up the pain until I was howling, literally howling. This cataclysmic caterwauling continued for two whole hours after the film had finished, and just writing about it now is making me blink furiously.

So there you have it – three dogs, one dog-dragon, one donkey, one animatronic alien, two Pocahontases (Pocahontii?) and Old Ryan Gosling spooning Old Rachel McAdams comprise the rather ridiculous list of the movies that have made me bawl. It seems that crying, like comedy, is subjective.

Jamie will return next issue...
For more misadventures, follow:
[@jamie_graham9](#) on Twitter.

'JEEZ, ANY KID WHO DOESN'T
SOB AT THAT SCENE CAN
BE FOUND TORTURING PETS'





WIM WONDER
The German director
returns with 3D
drama *Les Beaux
Jours d'Aranjuez*.

Submergence took us to Africa, to Djibouti, and to places all over the world. So I was on the road extensively. A lot of it happens in the ocean and on the water, but the story... I think it's extremely contemporary.

What's your relationship with America been like over the years?

I lived there for a long time... and made several films to try and understand what it was. Some of them didn't [work], one of them did. The one that did understand a bit of America was *Paris, Texas*. The others sort of circled around it... *Hammett* and *The American Friend*, even *Alice In The Cities* went to America. *Kings Of The Road* was shot in Germany but it dealt with America. The only film that came to a certain conclusion was *Paris, Texas*. That at least allowed me to come back home. At the time, I wouldn't have dared to move back to Germany if I hadn't somehow accomplished my American mission.

How do you look back on the success of your Oscar-nominated documentary *Buena Vista Social Club*?

I wasn't surprised that the music was catching on. When I first heard the music, long before the CD came out, I knew this was going to catch on because it was just so beautiful. Sometimes you can tell that something has to open up for other people, because it couldn't be any other way. But I didn't think it was going to be *that* big! Music documentaries traditionally had not showed in theatres for years.

Is there anything you hate in films?

I'm totally against movies that try to plan people's reactions. I don't want to do that. I don't have a talent for it. The films of mine that were successful always surprised me and the films of mine I thought could be successful were always a disaster.

What film surprised you the most?

Wings Of Desire. I thought people were going to leave the theatre in hoards when it was playing in Cannes! That they were not going to follow me on that transcendental path and they were going to punish me for it. And it became the film that was most seen. I didn't foresee that. Not ever. **JM**

ETA | 2017 / *LES BEAUX JOURS D'ARANJUEZ* AND *SUBMERGENCE* BOTH OPEN NEXT YEAR.



MODERN CLASSICS
(Top to bottom) Wenders directed *Buena Vista Social Club*, *Wings Of Desire*, and Alicia Vikander in *Submergence*.

THE HERO

WIM WENDERS

Germany's prolific director is back in the third dimension...

Once the master of the road movie, with *Alice In The Cities*, *Kings Of The Road* and *Paris, Texas*, Wim Wenders is now bossing the world of 3D, with films such as *Pina* and brand new rural drama *Les Beaux Jours d'Aranjuez*. With Alicia Vikander-starrer *Submergence* due next year, this 71-year-old German has no plans to park up just yet.

As your new film *Les Beaux Jours d'Aranjuez* shows, you use 3D expertly. Do you feel Hollywood doesn't?

In my book, it's not used in Hollywood; it's abused! I say that because I know I have enough enemies there, and enough people there think 3D is owned by the studios, and arthouse people should forget the idea to mess with their property. They're killing the language. 3D is very soon going to be obsolete and disappear because it's never been used properly – with very few exceptions. I'm proud to have made one of these exceptions.

Adapted from Peter Handke's play, *Les Beaux* shows your understanding of women. Is that something that's developed over time?

I didn't even dare to touch female characters for a long time until –

I think it was Nastassja [Kinski] in *Paris, Texas* that made me realise I could also direct a woman and could also bring out something in a woman that I just didn't dare before. I always admired these directors who had this incredible touch to direct women... and I didn't have it. [Rainer Werner] Fassbinder had it. Hanna Schygulla in his films was the most alive person on the planet. I made a film with Hanna, *Wrong Move*, and she was not that alive – and it was my fault.

You just worked with Alicia Vikander on *Submergence*. How was that? Alicia was a dream come true.

'I THOUGHT PEOPLE WERE GOING TO WALK OUT OF WINGS OF DESIRE IN CANNES'

SOUND BYTES

Quotable dialogue from this month's movies – and their stars

"I'M NOT USING HYPERBOLE, HERE – IT'S GOING TO BE THE BIGGEST SPECTACLE MOVIE OF ALL TIME."

Chris Pratt bigs up *Guardians Of The Galaxy Vol. 2*.



56

Number of films that have opened bigger in the UK than flop *Ben-Hur* this year.



8.11 MILLION

Box office haul in pounds for *Bridget Jones's Baby*, the biggest ever romcom opening in the UK.

"DO YOU EVER FEEL LIKE YOUR LIFE HAS TURNED INTO SOMETHING YOU NEVER INTENDED?"

Susan Morrow (**Amy Adams**) nails how we all feel in *Nocturnal Animals*.



"THESE MEMORABLE CHARACTERS... WILL STILL BE RELEVANT AND AVANT-GARDE THREE DECADES LATER."



Spike Lee on turning his 1986 feature debut *She's Gotta Have It* into a TV series.

HELL'S BELLS

Adam Scott weds Evangeline Lilly in Netflix horror-comedy *Little Evil*, but begins to suspect her six-year-old son is the Antichrist.



GOOD THING
BAD THING



LATEST SCORE

Scheduling conflicts mean Alexandre Desplat can no longer score *Rogue One*. Thankfully Michael Giacchino (*Star Trek*, *Jurassic World*) has stepped up.

"I SIGNED ON TO DO A SUBSTANTIAL ROLE. HALFWAY THROUGH SHOOTING THEY WERE LIKE, 'WHAT WOULD YOU THINK IF YOU JUST GOT SHOT OUT OF NOWHERE?'"

Rebecca Hall talks about her role being cut down in *Iron Man 3*.



"IT'S GOT NUDITY, SWEARING, A TON OF VIOLENCE."

Blair Witch director **Adam Wingard** on his *Death Note* series on Netflix.





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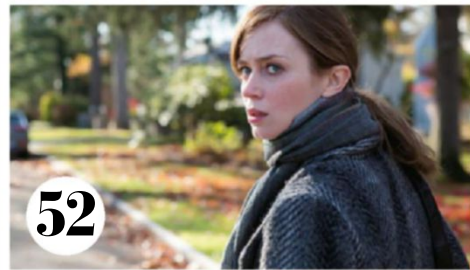
THE WORLD'S MOST TRUSTED MOVIE REVIEWS

48

ARRIVAL

Close encounters of
the five-star kind...





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55



NEW RELEASES

OUT NOW

The Girl On The Train	★★★	p52
The Guv'nor	★★★	p56
Inferno	★★★	p55
Kickboxer: Vengeance	★★	p53
Miss Peregrine's Home For Peculiar Children	★★★★★	p54

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I, Daniel Blake	★★★★★	p58
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28 OCTOBER

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My Feral Heart	★★★	p56
Nocturnal Animals	★★★★★	p50
Richard Linklater: Dream Is Destiny	★★★★★	p53
Rupture	★★	p51
A Street Cat Named Bob	★★★	p57

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Arrival	★★★★★	p48
Revolution: New Art For A New World	★★★★★	p56

11 NOVEMBER

100 Streets	★★★	p58
American Pastoral	★★	p59
Francofonia	★★★	p59
The Innocents	★★★★★	p53
Napoleon	★★★★★	p54
Panic	★★★	p53

ALSO RELEASED

We couldn't see them in time for this issue, so head to gamesradar.com/totalfilm for reviews of the following:

TITLE	RELEASE DATE
The Accountant	4 November
Doctor Strange	25 October
Jack Reacher: Never Go Back	20 October
Keeping Up With The Joneses	28 October
Kevin Hart: What Now?	11 November

For more reviews visit gamesradar.com/totalfilm

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Denis Villeneuve **STARRING**
Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner, Forest Whitaker, Michael Stuhlbarg,
Tzi Ma **SCREENPLAY** Eric Heisserer **DISTRIBUTOR** eOne
RUNNING TIME 116 mins

ARRIVAL

Amy Adams makes Contact...

★★★★★ OUT 10 NOVEMBER

When the aliens show up in *Arrival*, it's not with your typical invasion-movie bombast. The first sign of something unusual comes when a symphony of smartphone notifications ripples round a sparsely attended lecture by language professor Dr. Louise Banks (Amy Adams). Attendees are alerted to the news story that's about to dominate the globe: enormous, pebble-shaped spacecraft have arrived, and they're hovering in the air at 12 random locations around Earth. It's a typically understated start to a super-smart sci-fi that'll blow your mind and have you on the edge of your seat without recourse to explosions or souped-up fighter jets. Take note, *Independence Day: Resurgence*...

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

CONTACT 1997

Jodie Foster tries to get in touch with intelligent life out there.

UP 2009

The yardstick for movies that make you cry within five minutes.

SICARIO 2015

Villeneuve throws another tough professional in at the deep end.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

That it grips from its first moments is thanks in part to a superb opening montage, in which we're introduced to Banks and the daughter she loses to illness; it's a heartbreaking précis that plays like *Up*'s tearjerking opener. Banks now lives alone in a remote cabin, continuing her work as a language expert, clearly keeping most other humans at arm's length.

She's drawn into the larger story when Colonel Weber (Forest Whitaker) recruits her for her language skills: turns out the alien pods open their gates for a small window of time every 18 hours, and the US government wants to send her onto the one floating above Montana, along with theoretical physicist Ian Donnelly (Jeremy Renner), to start a dialogue with the extraterrestrials on-board to find out why they're here. Across Earth, other nations are plotting their own interactions with the ships.

She wasn't impressed with the giant birthday balloon.

A combination of language studies and global politics sounds dry, but that couldn't be further from the truth.

CANNY ADAMS

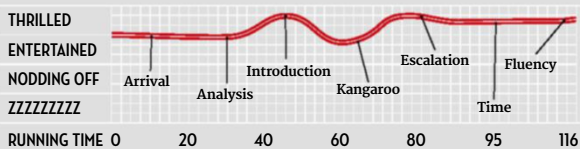
As the plot unfolds and the visitors' motives begin to come into focus, director Denis Villeneuve (*Sicario*) ensures it all plays out with clockwork precision; even when the jargon gets a bit technical, it always manages to sound like it's making sense (it helps that it's frequently leavened with humour). Banks summing up the difficulty in getting the 'heptapod' aliens to understand one simple sentence is a delight. It's not easy to turn the creatures' subtitles on: their

language takes the form of inky black spores that form patterned circles. How do you clarify the distinction between a weapon and a tool with a species that talks in shapes? In this case, Google Translate won't quite cut it.

Amy Adams is, as ever, superb, ensuring you believe the character's heartache and authority, acting as the audience's unpatronising entry point. It's a strong month for Adams, who has another impressive turn in Tom Ford's *Nocturnal Animals* (see p50), so expect her to add more Oscar nominations to her collection (of five) when awards season rolls round. Jeremy Renner provides sturdy support in a role that requires toning down the tough-guy *Avengers* act to pleasing effect, though this is very much Adams' film.

The themes *Arrival* toys with get bigger and bigger – from language, to love, to the nature of time – but they're

'LODGES IN YOUR HEAD FOR DAYS, LONG AFTER ITS MOVING ENDING'

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handled with such dexterity that you won't be struggling to keep up; it never scrambles your brain like the final act of *Interstellar*. Villeneuve is clearly operating at the very top of his game. A lot of films have to make a choice between blowing your mind and melting your heart. *Arrival* doesn't.

IN THE LAP OF THE 'PODS

While it won't be off-putting to those sceptical about sci-fi, the film contains plenty to delight genre fans. The gravity-shift boarding of the spacecraft recalls visuals from *2001: A Space*

Odyssey. The alien creatures feel organic and believable, even if the CGI isn't always perfect. DP Bradford Young (stepping in for Villeneuve's *Prisoners*/*Sicario*/*Blade Runner* sequel cinematographer Roger Deakins) elegantly captures the scale of the visiting craft and the claustrophobic corridors of the military basecamp at which Banks and Donnelly are stationed. Sparely used flashbacks have a haunting quality, and are given heart-stabbing heft by Jóhann Jóhannsson's painfully poignant score.

Fascinating as it is to watch Banks and Donnelly's developing interactions with the heptapods, the tension ratchets up as the 11 other sites grow antsy of waiting too long to uncover the meaning behind the arrival. Have they come to get us to work together, or to drive us apart? Of particular concern is China's military leader General Shang

(Tzi Ma), who is itching to go on the offensive. Without hammering its message, *Arrival*'s advocacy for communication across all boundaries couldn't feel more timely.

Like the best sci-fi, *Arrival* lodges itself in your head for days, and will be sparking conversations long after its moving denouement. That Villeneuve so seamlessly wrangles thought-provoking ideas with awe-inspiring visuals and a very human story bodes extremely well for his upcoming *Blade Runner 2*. Although following this means that sequel now has even more to live up to... **Matt Maytum**

THE VERDICT

An intelligent, eloquent and stirring sci-fi that grips from start to finish, *Arrival* is up there with the year's best movies.

Kitchen sorted, Adams is hooked – what will the Ikea website offer next?



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

WRITTEN ON THE WIND 1956
Douglas Sirk's tale of moneyed indolence.

[SAFE] 1995
Todd Haynes' stylishly chilling New Age allegory.

LOST HIGHWAY 1997
Night drives and domestic dread: David Lynch blazes fractured noir trails.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

NOCTURNAL ANIMALS

Take a read on the wild side...

★★★★★ OUT 4 NOVEMBER

Are you willing to go outside of strict procedure on this?" barks Michael Shannon's Texas lawman in one strand of Tom Ford's noir-tinted melodrama. Fashion designer Ford certainly exceeds set procedure in his sumptuous, suspenseful second film, lifted from Austin Wright's meta-novel *Tony And Susan*. Juggling surface and subtext, high style and raw feeling, Ford pulls off a visceral brain-teaser with genre-mangling ambition and confidence: even when he leaves you unmoored, his hold is sure.

Proving that Colin Firth's lead in Ford's debut, *A Single Man* (2009), was no fluke, that assurance shows emphatically in the performances. On peak form, Amy Adams taps deeply into the aching neurosis behind the poise of married, moneyed and melancholy LA gallery manager Susan

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** Tom Ford
STARRING Amy Adams, Jake Gyllenhaal, Isla Fisher, Michael Shannon, Laura Linney, Aaron Taylor-Johnson. **SCREENPLAY** Tom Ford **DISTRIBUTOR** Universal
RUNNING TIME 115 mins

Morrow. When her ex-husband Edward (Jake Gyllenhaal) sends her his novel, *Nocturnal Animals*, she starts reading. Swiftly, we're guided between memories of love soured and the novel's Texas noir nightmare, where a double-duty Gyllenhaal's city wimp turns vengeful after his wife and daughter are abducted during a late-night road altercation.

Smartly, Ford makes these triple-stacked plots magnify, not muffle each other. Adams imbues the act of reading with magnetism; as for Edward's novel, the electric highway confrontation sizzles with tight-wound tension. Themes of guilt, revenge and wounded manhood course through its fraught aftermath, intensified as they bleed into Susan's story via the history of her bust-up with Edward.

With near-Hitchcockian levels of suspense and suggestion, Ford charges every scene, setting and segue with implication. DOP Seamus McGarvey's lustrous images stress the contrasts between Susan's mansion and wide-open Texas, from first-world torpor to existential drift. Later, a punch thrown in the novel cuts aggressively to Susan

dropping the book, her control rocked by loaded prose in editor Joan Sobel's whip-sharp work.

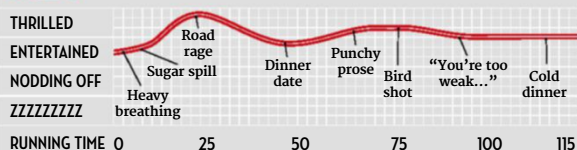
Swooning to Abel Korzeniowski's Bernard Herrmann-esque score, what emerges is a tale of repressed romance, stifling conformity and literary revenge, all embedded in style. Rhyming images accrued across story strands invite us to look closer. As they mount, so our emotional investment deepens. (Remember the startling opening-titles sequence – suggestive callbacks occur.)

Fantastic ensemble casting fleshes out Ford's pull. Isla Fisher's Adams-like wife, Shannon's beady detective and Aaron Taylor-Johnson's lank-haired varmint all enthrall in Texas. In posh-world, Laura Linney assumes attack mode as Susan's toxic mother and Michael Sheen delivers an art-clique cameo with waspish style. "Our world is a lot less painful than the real world," he tells Susan. But as Adams takes centre-stage for an ambiguously agonised finale, the strictly policed boundary between worlds crumbles. Same goes for Ford's multiple layers: his sense of studied design is scrupulous, but it comes etched in emotional intensity. **Kevin Harley**

THE VERDICT

Style is substance in Ford's second film. Unlike many puzzle-piece movies, it thrills on every level.

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™





Cause we could be lifted,
lifted... oh, so not that
Lighthouse Family then?

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Derek Cianfrance **STARRING** Michael Fassbender, Alicia Vikander, Rachel Weisz, Bryan Brown **SCREENPLAY** Derek Cianfrance **DISTRIBUTOR** eOne **RUNNING TIME** 133 mins

THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS

The lighthouse family...

★★★★☆ OUT 1 NOVEMBER

Adapted from M.L. Stedman's 2012 novel, this is director Derek Cianfrance's third film investigating fatherhood in its many forms. After the horrors of World War 2, shellshocked ex-soldier Tom Sherbourne (Michael Fassbender) finds peace as a lighthouse keeper on a remote Western Australian island. He marries local beauty Isabel (Alicia Vikander), tragedy strikes, and when a baby washes ashore in a rowing boat, she makes him keep it – a decision the entire cast will regret. As an awkward man seeking – and ruined by – silence, Fassbender is excellent, though there are really two films here: the first, wet and woolly; the second heart-wrenching. Though the passage of time is handled poorly (mainly through letters), and the use of light as a symbol for the truth is somewhat hammered home, when Cianfrance's stiff upper-lipped effort finally gives way to rawer emotions, it brings to mind the work of Jane Campion. But where Campion's keyboard sang with repressed feelings, the one in Sherbourne's lighthouse is beautiful to look at but doesn't quite play. A decent metaphor for the film itself. **Matt Glasby**

THE VERDICT

Cianfrance's moving but messy melodrama can't quite conjure the elusive alchemy of adaptation.



IN PURSUIT OF SILENCE

★★★★☆ OUT 21 OCTOBER
When composer John Cage debuted 4'33" (comprising four minutes, 33 seconds of silence) in 1952, the audience nearly ran him out of town. Yet in today's world, silence is a highly prized virtue, as this vital documentary exploring the philosophy, spirituality and practice of silence points out. One film, at least, for which there really should be no talking in the cinema. **Ali Catterall**



RUPTURE

★★★★☆ OUT 4 NOVEMBER
Steven Shainberg's *(Secretary)* thriller never quite delivers on the promise of its central mystery. Single mum Renee (Noomi Rapace) is kidnapped by a secret group and taken to a secure facility for experimentation. Our curiosity's piqued, but too much time is spent sneaking aimlessly around the building. And when the B-movie reveal finally comes into focus, it feels like a waste of a good set-up. **Matt Looker**



NG83: WHEN WE WERE B BOYS

★★★★☆ 28 OCTOBER
If Shane Meadows had made *Breakdance: The Movie*, it might've looked like this amusing account of how Nottingham rivals The Assassins and Rock City Crew busted out the big moves. The cutting lacks punch but the protagonists are vividly drawn, from beatboxer Barry to Dancing Danny, the 42-year-old still under his mum's thumb. Poignant ending, too. **James Mottram**



OUIJA: ORIGIN OF EVIL

★★★★☆ OUT 21 OCTOBER
Set 50 years prior to 2014's *Ouija*, this (comparatively) superior prequel opens up the story of spirit Doris Zander, here the young daughter of a fraudulent medium who discovers a new board game to spice up her act. Unlike the stock teenagers of *Ouija*, the Zander family are likeable and convincing. Scares are still rudimentary, but rooted in a sharper script. **Stephen Kelly**



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

FATAL ATTRACTION 1987
Super-zeitgeisty (extra-) marital thriller.

GONE GIRL 2014
Fincher's adap still thrills even if you know the book.

THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN 2016
Haley Bennett's other recent breakout role.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

Lots of extras try really hard not to look at the camera. Some succeed...

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN

Scenes from a carriage...

★★★★★ OUT NOW

Taken from the runaway bestseller by Paula Hawkins, Tate Taylor's (*The Help*, *Get On Up*) film is a faithful adaptation – perhaps *too* faithful – of this marital mystery tale. For the uninitiated, like Christopher Nolan's *Memento* before it, the story centres on an unreliable memory-addled narrator – only here it's booze not a blow to the head that's left our lead in a foggy cloud of unknowing.

Emily Blunt plays Rachel Watson, an increasingly alcohol-dependent New York commuter who rides the train to work every day, glancing wistfully at two houses on her journey. One belongs to her ex-husband Tom (Justin Theroux) and his former mistress/now wife Anna

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Tate Taylor
STARRING Emily Blunt, Luke Evans, Rebecca Ferguson, Haley Bennett, Justin Theroux
SCREENPLAY Erin Cressida Wilson
DISTRIBUTOR eOne **RUNNING TIME** 111 mins

(Rebecca Ferguson), and their baby; the other to a couple she doesn't know – Scott (Luke Evans) and Megan (Haley Bennett).

Fantasising about this mystery pair, Rachel also can't stop calling her ex, much to the chagrin of Anna. But everything changes the day Rachel glimpses Megan on her balcony kissing another man. Soon after, Megan disappears – the very same night Rachel is blind-drunk. When she wakes up the next day, bloody, bruised and unable to remember a thing, she starts piecing together events. Was she a witness to Megan's demise? Is she a possible suspect?

Scripted by Erin Cressida Wilson (*Secretary*), *The Girl On The Train* struggles to find an elegant structure. True, Hawkins' book, written from the perspective of its three female characters, is a difficult one to translate. The immediate casualty is Anna, leaving the dyed-blond Ferguson a virtual bystander.

More impressive is Haley Bennett, who captures the restless spirit of the art gallery employee-turned-nanny

Megan. While Justin Theroux is rather too stiff as Tom, Luke Evans is credible as the frantic, temper-frayed Scott. The support – Édgar Ramírez as Megan's shrink, Allison Janney as the lead cop – also offers some texture.

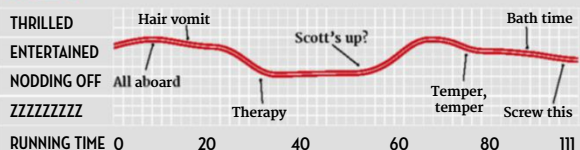
While transposing the action from London to New York's outskirts doesn't jar as much as some readers feared, what does distract is Taylor's direction. The biggest sticking point? A key scene set in a tunnel, where repeated use of slow motion feels like an amateurish attempt to replicate the workings of a befuddled mind.

Fortunately, Blunt keeps the film anchored. Playing drunk convincingly is no mean feat, but she cracks it, maintaining our sympathy for a character who has gradually slipped towards becoming a functioning alcoholic. Looking blotchy and unsteady on her feet, she never plays it for laughs, but instead with an air of desperation, as if solving this mystery may be her last hope. But this year's *Gone Girl*? Not a chance. *James Mottram*

THE VERDICT

Guilty of being slavishly loyal, Taylor's film never quite translates into the cinematic equivalent of Hawkins' book. Blunt, though, is excellent.

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™





RICHARD LINKLATER: DREAM IS DESTINY

★★★★☆ OUT 4 NOVEMBER

Richard Linklater's movies are so painstakingly low-key that he often doesn't get credit for his innovation and influence over the past 25 years. This doc by Lewis Black and Karen Bernstein certainly puts him on that pedestal, charting his achievements from ambitious high-schooler to indie game-changer and beyond. A comprehensive celebration, the film includes contributions from key collaborators (Hawke, Delpy, McConaughey) and Linklater himself. An inspiring rallying cry for small-town dreamers everywhere. **Matt Maytum**



PANIC

★★★★☆ OUT 11 NOVEMBER

"We all want to own something put together with a bit of care and artistry," says night-owl music journo Andrew (David Gyasi) to friend-with-benefits Amy (Pippa Nixon) in this lonely, London-set thriller. In which case: bingo. Writer/director Sean Spencer's debut is atmospheric and crisply shot, following the damaged Andrew's attempts to save a trafficked Chinese woman he glimpses in the flat opposite. Between Spencer's controlled direction and Gyasi's diffident performance, the restraint that represents the film's strongest suit also makes for disconnected viewing. **Matt Glasby**



THE INNOCENTS

★★★★☆ OUT 11 NOVEMBER

In this handsome, quietly moving drama, a French Red Cross doctor (a stoical Lou de Laâge) finds herself secretly aiding a group of Polish nuns who are pregnant after WW2 atrocities. Based on a true story, it's directed with beautiful, painterly restraint by Anne Fontaine (best known for pretty pieces such as *Gemma Boveri*), who lets powerful performances by Agata Buzek (as a nun of faltering faith), and fearsome abbess Agata Kulesza power the story. Echoes of *Ida* and *Of Gods And Men* sound in its stark, unsparing theme of war battling with belief, despite the odd hopeful plot twist. **Kate Stables**



GIRLS LOST

★★★★☆ OUT 4 NOVEMBER

A surreal Swedish gender-swapper that recycles an old *Charmed* plot, as three bullied schoolgirls become boys after ingesting fluid from a mysterious flower. Realism isn't a priority here, but as Kim (Tuva Jagell) struggles to let her male identity go, director Alexandra-Therese Keining explores complex issues of trans identity, homophobia and sapphic desire. Sadly, much of the debate becomes muddled as the plot dives down increasingly angsty avenues, while the melodramatic denouement feels like a Scandi version of *Byker Grove*. Interesting, but others have explored similar themes far more effectively. **Josh Winning**



STARFISH

★★★★☆ OUT 28 OCTOBER

Between its potent leads, measured direction and harrowing true-life origins, Bill Clark's heart-rending indie drama wreaks havoc on the emotions with care and control. Tom Riley and *Downton*'s Joanne Froggatt give it their all as Tom and Nicola Ray, Midlands parents whose idyllic life is blindsided when Tom contracts sepsis. As Tom's limbs and lower face are removed, Clark doesn't stint from showing Tom and his family's pains. But he sidelines sensationalism for a sensitive study of the personal and political traumas of Tom's illness, anchoring a tough issue in raw human intimacy and intensity. **Kevin Harley**



KICKBOXER: VENGEANCE

★★★☆☆ OUT NOW

This limp reboot of Jean-Claude Van Damme's 1989 romp sticks a fedora on his head and relegates him to the trainer role. Front and centre is square-jawed and oh-so-bland Alain Moussi, out to avenge the death of his brother at the hands of Dave Bautista's Muay Thai champ. The many fights are pieced together in the cutting room – staccato, graceless and lacking oomph – and Gina Carano is sidelined as a promoter. Still, the requisite training montage is half-decent, and the split-screen end credits replay Van Damme's infamous dancing in the original, with Moussi mirroring his every bad move. **Jamie Graham**



ATTACK OF THE LEDERHOSEN ZOMBIES

★★★★☆ OUT 28 OCTOBER

After chewing up scouts, Nazis, strippers, beavers, ninjas and Cockneys, the zom-com takes a bite out of men in leather shorts. Three snowboarders get stranded in an après-ski tavern just as an unscrupulous businessman crams toxic waste into a snow machine, triggering a zombie apocalypse. Just as daft as it sounds but not half as bad, this Alpine splatter-fest works surprisingly well thanks to the old-school FX, the creative death scenes, and a vein of self-awareness that never gets too smug. But for all its dumb fun, this genre has reached the bottom of the mountain. **Paul Bradshaw**



Miss P stops dead, suddenly unsure if she turned off the iron...

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Tim Burton **STARRING** Asa Butterfield, Eva Green, Samuel L. Jackson, Ella Purnell **SCREENPLAY** Jane Goldman **DISTRIBUTOR** 20th Century Fox **RUNNING TIME** 127 mins

MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME FOR PECULIAR CHILDREN

Adventure Tim...

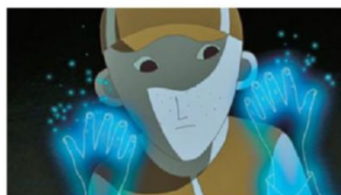
★★★★★ OUT NOW

Tim Burton's charmingly creepy take on Ransom Riggs' YA mega-seller sees a houseful of mutant children battle monstrous adversaries. Jane Goldman's script is a bit of a mutant too: as teen hero Jake (Asa Butterfield) takes up the challenge to protect Miss P's (Eva Green) Peculiars from the ghastly, soul-sucking Wights, it throws in emotional angst, retro innocence, and dark Harry Potter-ish scares. But Burton's rich style and surprisingly sincere tone draw it all together skilfully.

On the downside, the supersized plot seems determined to cram in all of Jake's long odyssey, without leaving much room to show off the sweet, squabbling Peculiars' startling talents. Still, the ingenious seaside battle finale is worth the wait: a Harryhausen-homaging riot of candyfloss carnage and death-dealing fairground rides. **Kate Stables**

THE VERDICT

Cluttered but charming, Burton's horror-spiked freaks-and-a-geek fantasy proves a home run for Asa Butterfield.



PHANTOM BOY

★★★★★ OUT 21 OCTOBER

In this tender animated caper, our hero is a boy undergoing chemotherapy. When he develops an ability to project his spirit form, he unites with an injured cop against a Picasso-faced villain. Noirish touches flesh out the wispy plot, yet it's the old-school animation that engages most: lending clarity to the emotions at stake, ensuring our sickly hero's resilience tugs on the heart. **Kevin Harley**



TROLLS

★★★★★ OUT 21 OCTOBER

Coughing, dancing and farting glitter in the faces of anyone without an upside-down frown, this DreamWorks toy-based 'toon is 90 minutes of pure happy. Anna Kendrick and Justin Timberlake voice two whisk-headed gnomes out to rescue their friends from an orc's cooking pot, but the story is really just an excuse for a lot of singing. Lovely animation evokes a world made from Fuzzy-Felt and Play-Doh. **Paul Bradshaw**



NAPOLEON

★★★★★ OUT 11 NOVEMBER

Charting 30 years of Napoleon's life over five-and-a-half hours, Abel Gance's 1927 silent epic demands serious commitment. That's nothing, however, to the dedication of historian Kevin Brownlow who's spent years piecing together fragments of this much-chopped biopic to create the astounding document we have today, climaxing with a battle so spectacular it needs three screens to capture it. **Neil Smith**



SONITA

★★★★★ OUT 21 OCTOBER

How close should docu-makers get to their subjects? That theme is rousingly addressed in Rokhsareh Ghaem Maghami's film about an 18-year-old Afghan refugee in Iran with Rihanna-sized dreams. Sonita lives in poverty yet wants to be a rapper, an ambition threatened when her mother tries to sell her as a bride. Maghami's intervention raises complex questions, but fuels a stirring pay-off. **Kevin Harley**



Closing in on his record for historical buildings spotted in one film, Langdon picks up the pace.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

MEMENTO 2000

An amnesiac Guy Pearce hunts a murderer.

HANNIBAL 2007

Florence also provides a backdrop for the Lecter sequel.

24 SEASON 3

2003-2004

Jack Bauer has just 24 hours to stop a virus decimating LA.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

INFERNO

Upping the Dante...

★★★★★ OUT NOW

He traced Christ's bloodline in *The Da Vinci Code* and stopped the Vatican going kablooey in *Angels And Demons*. What's left for an encore? For Harvard brain-box Robert Langdon, nothing less than attempting to save humanity will do in *Inferno*, the third of Dan Brown's novels to be brought to the screen by the dream team that is Tom Hanks, director Ron Howard and producer Brian Grazer.

This time around, Hanks' puzzle-solving symbologist has a major handicap – a wound to the noggin that has left him plagued by apocalyptic visions, suffering “mild retrograde amnesia” and prone to “nausea, confusion and dizziness” according to the doctor. This leaves him in no fit state, then, to deduce the current location of a Doomsday virus cooked up

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Ron Howard
STARRING Tom Hanks, Felicity Jones, Ben Foster, Omar Sy, Irrfan Khan, Sidse Babett Knudsen, Ana Ularu **SCREENPLAY** David Koepp **DISTRIBUTOR** Sony
RUNNING TIME 121 mins

by a bonkers biologist (Ben Foster) as a cure for the planet's overpopulation, even with the aid of a resourceful yet doe-eyed medic (Felicity Jones) who comes to his assistance after he wakes up groggy and disoriented on an Italian hospital gurney.

No sooner has he done so, of course, than an implacable assassin (Ana Ularu) starts shooting at them, sending Hanks and Jones out into Florence on a Dante-driven scavenger hunt that has the combined forces of the World Health Organisation snapping at their heels. It's enough to ensure a breathless first hour that takes in everything from the Palazzo Vecchio to the Boboli Gardens, interspersed by nuggets of Wikipedia knowledge, visuals from a drone's POV and hellish dream sequences that give *Inferno* a stylistic audacity absent from its 2006 and 2009 predecessors.

Hour two, alas, is an entirely different kettle of fish. Here Howard exchanges the streamlined kineticism of a race-against-time thriller for a bewildering tumult of reversals,

flashbacks and contradictory information. Meanwhile a mushy romantic subplot involving *Borgen*'s Sidse Babett Knudsen gives rise to a whole new sub-stratum of irrelevant backstory. Not only that, but there's also a pointless side-trip to Venice that stops the film dead just when it ought to be gathering momentum.

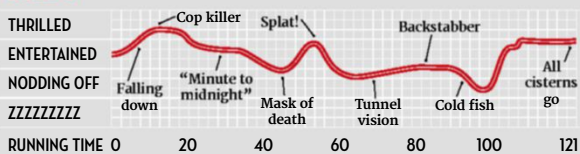
Never wanting to rest on its breathless trip around the ancient historical landmarks, things begin to pick up again in time for an explosive Istanbul climax that effectively uses sites previously featured in *From Russia With Love* – an appropriate touchstone for a film whose hero acts more like a globe-trotting James Bond than a fusty book-scented academic. (Check out the hilarious scene where he makes off with a priceless artefact while a museum guide's back is turned.)

In spite of all this, though, we are still left with a feeling of both missed opportunity and nagging frustration. Having already taken two rides on the Dan Brown merry-go-round, shouldn't this have been the one where Ron finally got it right? **Neil Smith**

THE VERDICT

Early promise proves misleading in a sequel that should be far better than *The Da Vinci Code* than it actually is.

FILM PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE™



Trying to connect to the wifi was proving a serious test of the monk's vows...



CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Werner Herzog **STARRING** Lawrence Krauss, Kevin Mitnick, Elon Musk, Sebastian Thrun, Lucianne Walkowicz
SCREENPLAY N/A **DISTRIBUTOR** Dogwoof **RUNNING TIME** 98 mins

LO AND BEHOLD, REVERIES OF THE CONNECTED WORLD

Internet explorer...

★★★★☆ OUT 28 OCTOBER

The web is full of weird wonders, but it takes a special filmmaker to excavate poignancy from its hidden depths. A veteran cinematic explorer with a passion for human ecstasies and extremes, Werner Herzog proves the right guide here, training his wryly incisive eye on the interface between humanity and an invention that has transformed lives.

After a visit to the web's birthplace stokes feelings of dread and reverence, Herzog's calmly quizzical voice excels in interviews, where he gets techies to ponder AI romanticism, hackers to confess all, and web casualties to share. What could have been a freak show turns poetic and compassionate under his beady watch as he ponders what the future holds for a net-based world. Anxiety, awe and uncertainty overshadow his far-reaching predictions. But even at his most out-there, Herzog's sense of human connectivity holds firm. **Kevin Harley**

THE VERDICT

Herzog reaches parts of the web other filmmakers wouldn't think to poke in this diligent, droll docu-browse.



THE DARKEST UNIVERSE

★★★★☆ OUT 4 NOVEMBER

Described by directors Tom Kingsley and Will Sharpe as a "comedy psychodrama", this idiosyncratic, mini-budgeted work sees Sharpe play Zac, a city trader traumatised by the disappearance of sister Alice (co-writer Tiani Ghosh) and her boyfriend. The story alternates between glorious canal scenery and Zac's woefully inept attempts to drum up help. An offbeat delight. **Philip Kemp**



REVOLUTION - NEW ART FOR A NEW WORLD

★★★★☆ OUT 10 NOVEMBER

This is a fascinating doc on 20th Century Russian avant-garde art. Featuring the voices of Matthew Macfadyen and Tom Hollander, it looks at the artists who flourished in the wake of the revolution before Stalin, who detested this arty business, packed many of these 'enemies of the state' off to the gulag. Eye-opening stuff, in every sense. **Ali Catterall**



THE GUV'NOR

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

The late Lenny McLean may be best known to filmgoers as *Lock, Stock's* Barry the Baptist. But to bare-knuckle boxing fans he'll always be respectfully known by the titular nickname. In this surprisingly poignant doc, his son Jamie goes in search of his dad's past, uncovering a complex, charismatic character, marinated in violence, but also a product of his environment, from an all-but-vanished East End. **Ali Catterall**



MY FERAL HEART

★★★★☆ OUT 4 NOVEMBER

There's a refreshingly positive approach to disability in Jane Gull's debut. When his mum dies, Luke (Steven Brandon), a self-sufficient man with Down syndrome, is sent to a care home, where he befriends gobby gardeners and aids a girl he finds in a local barn. A moving, sincere British indie that finishes just as it's getting started. NB: Can only be seen in cinemas by booking via ourscreen.com. **Jordan Farley**



INTO THE INFERNO

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

This Netflix doc is getting a limited release, and its staggering volcanic footage deserves big-screen attention. Werner Herzog teams with volcanologist Clive Oppenheimer to look at explosive peaks around the world. The visuals will leave you agog – but as with much of Herzog's doc work, it's the people he meets along the way that fascinate most, even if nature is indifferent to them. **Matt Maytum**



ETHEL & ERNEST

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

This charming, very English animation completely captures both the look and the spirit of Raymond Briggs' funny, poignant graphic novel about his working-class parents' life in a London reshaped by 20th Century tumult. The storytelling can feel a bit plodding, but Jim Broadbent's exuberant Ernest and Brenda Blethyn's timid, upwardly mobile Ethel give the marriage a touching intimacy and warmth. **Kate Stables**



A STREET CAT NAMED BOB

★★★★★ OUT 4 NOVEMBER

As real-life heartwarmers go, *Bob* is as snugly as the feline star himself. A homeless man (Luke Treadaway) gets a break when a social worker (Joanne Froggatt) and a random moggy offer friendship. *Bob* has spawned multiple books, but what works on the page seems slight on screen. That's not to say it isn't life-affirming, it's just not quite the cat's pyjamas. **Jane Crowther**



AFTER LOVE

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

After 15 years, Boris (Cedric Kahn) and Marie (Bérénice Bejo), the parents of twin daughters, are breaking up. It's an acrimonious split: Boris is refusing to leave the flat until receiving his share of its value. Joachim Lafosse's drama is an unsentimentally observed, credibly acted study of a marriage turned sour, in which a dance sequence involving the whole family movingly conveys a former shared happiness. **Tom Dawson**

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Yeon Sang-ho **STARRING** Gong Yoo, Kim Su-an, Jung Yu-mi, Ma Dong-seok, Choi Woo-shik **SCREENPLAY** Yeon Sang-ho **DISTRIBUTOR** Studiocanal **RUNNING TIME** 118 mins

TRAIN TO BUSAN

Mind the gore, please...

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

The film *World War Z* should have been, this Korean outbreak horror from writer/director Yeon Sang-ho starts slow but ends up an absolute blast. When distant dad Gong Yoo, sad-eyed daughter Kim Soo-an, and a lively supporting cast board the eponymous engine – along with some of the infected – the jeopardy levels ramp up from underwhelming to unbearable.

The clicky-limbed 'zombies' are almost comic on their own, but when they join forces to create an inhuman chain they're formidable, and the film has much to say about the necessity of sticking together to survive. Gong's ruthless capitalist is an "expert at leaving useless people behind" according to expectant father (and ethical centre) Ma Dong-seok, and as our heroes *Die Hard* their way through carriages of shuffling corpses, they find that scheming humans pose as much danger as the undead. Tense, tender and thrilling, it's a wonderful script crafted with sincerity and cock-eyed charm. Indeed, not since *Shaun or Dawn* (2004) has a zombie film mixed horror, comedy and character work so well. The excitement comes not from SFX or shock tactics, but from the fact that you really care what happens. **Matt Glasby**

THE VERDICT

More multilayered Stephen King epic than raw Romero, *Train To Busan* bowls you over with brains, guts and heart.

Nobody was getting between him and the last chicken mayo sandwich on the food trolley...





The Human League's new youth-fuelled lineup didn't really hit the mark.

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Ken Loach **STARRING** Dave Johns, Hayley Squires, Sharon Percy, Briana Shann **SCREENPLAY** Paul Laverty **DISTRIBUTOR** eOne **RUNNING TIME** 100 mins

I, DANIEL BLAKE

The welfare state we're in...

★★★★★ OUT 21 OCTOBER

Social realism stalwart Ken Loach threatened retirement after 2014's *Jimmy's Hall*, but is back with his best for some years. This Newcastle-set tale follows 59-year-old carpenter Daniel (Dave Johns), ordered not to work by his doctor as he recovers from a heart attack, but told by a box-ticking welfare-state functionary that he must actively seek employment or else lose his jobseeker's allowance. Entwined with his heartbreaking, rage-making tale is that of single mum Katie (Hayley Squires), forced to relocate with her two kids from a London hostel to the North East, where she has no friends or family to support her.

Written by Loach's frequent scribe Paul Laverty and shot with plenty of warmth but zero fuss by ace DoP Robbie Ryan, this is a plainly told drama that never loses sight of its leads as they navigate a maze of Kafka-esque bureaucracy. A couple of scenes are perhaps too on the nose, but the naturalistic performances are faultless, the righteous anger controlled, and the bleakness dotted with moments of humour and small acts of kindness. *I, Daniel Blake* is, first and foremost, a deeply humanistic film. **Jamie Graham**

THE VERDICT

The 80-year-old director still has plenty of fire in his belly. Warm, belligerent and, in places, unbearably moving.



BOYZ N THE HOOD

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

The youngest-ever Best Director nominee, John Singleton was only 23 when he made this urgent state-of-the-nation drama. But his skill with the camera, handling of actors, and raw dialogue suggests a seasoned pro. Despite being just six-and-a-half years older than on-screen son Cuba Gooding Jr., Laurence Fishburne excels as the voice of sanity in this tragic saga, while Ice Cube sears the screen. **Neil Smith**



100 STREETS

★★★★★ OUT 11 NOVEMBER

Idris Elba and Gemma Arterton, together, naked! That's a sell, right there. But for the less shallow viewer here's one of those multi-stranded London dramas following randomly colliding characters, in which Elba's washed-up rugby player and Franz Drameh's conflicted gang member both have some growing up to do. It's not Altman, but its heart is in the right place and Drameh impresses. **Ali Catterall**



BURN BURN BURN

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

Laura Carmichael swaps *Downton* for a free-wheeling road movie that sees her and Chloe Pirrie embarking on an ashes-sprinkling odyssey at the behest of a deceased friend. Predictable mishaps ensue, punctuated by the occasional familiar face (Alice Lowe, Alison Steadman), and catty beyond-the-grave vids from the deceased Dan (Jack Farthing) that make you wonder if he was worth the trouble. **Neil Smith**



THE COMEDIAN'S GUIDE TO SURVIVAL

★★★★★ OUT 28 OCTOBER

The Inbetweeners' James Buckley plays real-life comedian James Mullinger in this (fictionalised) tale of career crisis. For a film so concerned with the secrets of great comedy, laughs are disappointingly lowbrow. Still, balancing selfishness with self-deprecation, Buckley makes for a pitiful but ultimately likeable lead, well-supported by co-stars and cameos. **Matt Looker**



QUEEN OF KATWE

★★★★☆ OUT 21 OCTOBER

A biopic about a Ugandan girl from the slums of Kampala who harbours ambitions of becoming a chess master, Mira Nair's (*Monsoon Wedding*) movie rarely makes an unpredictable move. But it has warmth, a lively sense of pace, and a fine breakout turn from Madina Nalwanga, whose Phiona swiftly becomes a gaming success, tasting a life her widowed mum (Lupita Nyong'o) can't provide. There are a few choice scenes – most notably when Phiona's coach (David Oyelowo) pits his young charges against some boarding-school rich kids – but minimal subtlety. Well it is a Disney family film, after all. But while there's sweetness, the big, sweeping emotions you hope for never quite arrive. **James Mottram**



AMERICAN PASTORAL

★★★★☆ OUT 11 NOVEMBER

Adapting Philip Roth's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel was always going to be a tall order for any director. In first-timer Ewan McGregor's hands it's entirely unwieldy. The family saga feels soapy when it should be an epic dissection of the American dream, as Seymour Levov (McGregor) evolves from high-school hero to hollowed-out family man. It never quite comes alive, but what disappoints most is the acting: McGregor coasts on his natural charm, but Jennifer Connelly (as Levov's trophy wife) and Dakota Fanning (as his unruly daughter) are wildly OTT. **Matt Maytum**



FRANCOFONIA

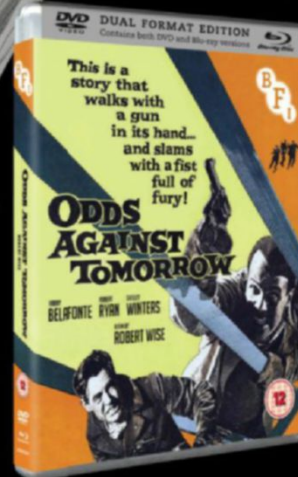
★★★★☆ OUT 11 NOVEMBER

Aleksandr Sokurov's (*Russian Ark*) thematically chewy if visually choppy film essay on the Louvre's chequered history demands close attention. At its heart is a beautifully dramatised story of how an unlikely friendship stopped Hitler pillaging France's treasures. Around it is wrapped a thumpingly metaphorical strand about an art-bearing ship in a heavy storm. Still, the portentous narration, restless visuals and whimsical ghost characters (an unexpected *Night At The Museum*-style Napoleon) combine to make a thoughtful case about the inevitable interweaving of art and war. **Kate Stables**

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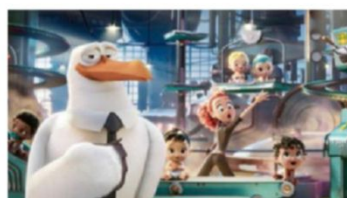
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BOX OFFICE CHARTS 05.09.16 – 02.10.16



BRIDGET JONES'S BABY

In the UK, Bridget's baby has been the centre of attention and feeding well. But in the US, audiences thought they could smell something funny and definitely don't want another.



STORKS

An underperformer in box-office terms, but parents have noted a 200 per cent increase in awkward questions. "Do babies come from birds?" "Why isn't this as funny as *Zootropolis*?"



SULLY

Clint Eastwood's hit true-lifer opens in the UK on 2 December, just in time to be re-branded as a Santa Claus movie: white hair, flies around doing good deeds, is totally a real person.

UK TOP 10

Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	Bridget Jones's Baby ★★★★★	£31.4M	£31.4M	3
2	Sausage Party ★★★	£4.9M	£7.6M	5
3	The Magnificent Seven ★★★★★	£4.4M	£4.4M	2
4	Bad Moms ★★	£4M	£8M	6
5	Miss Peregrine's Home... ★★★★★	£3.5M	£3.5M	1
6	Don't Breathe ★★★	£3.4M	£3.4M	4
7	Finding Dory ★★★	£2.8M	£41.7M	10
8	Kubo And The Two Strings ★★★★★	£2.7M	£2.7M	4
9	Blair Witch ★★★★★	£2.1M	£2.1M	3
10	Deepwater Horizon ★★★	£2M	£2M	1

US TOP 10

Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	Sully N/A	\$105.4M	\$105.4M	4
2	The Magnificent Seven ★★★★★	\$61.6M	\$61.6M	2
3	Storks ★★★	\$38.8M	\$38.8M	2
4	Don't Breathe ★★★	\$55M	\$55M	2
5	When The Bough Breaks N/A	\$28.5M	\$28.5M	4
6	Miss Peregrine's Home... ★★★★★	\$28.5M	\$28.5M	1
7	Bridget Jones's Baby ★★★★★	\$21M	\$21M	3
8	Suicide Squad ★★★	\$20.6M	\$320.8M	9
9	Deepwater Horizon ★★★	\$20.6M	\$20.6M	1
10	Blair Witch ★★★★★	\$19.1M	\$19.1M	3



THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

Modest numbers perhaps, but early tracking suggests this will be the 2017 DVD that most dads will want for their birthdays, then fall asleep to (waking up in time for all the shooting).



BLAIR WITCH

After a run of hit horrors, it's sad seeing the first lady of found footage fall short. Maybe she could do panto? Would be ideal for those wanting to give annoying relatives catatonia for Christmas.



MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME FOR PECULIAR CHILDREN

Will the Blackpool set-piece start a trend? Can we finally sell that *Fast & Furious* script set in the underground world of competitive dodgers?

STILL OUT, STILL GOOD... OUR PICK OF THE MOVIES OUT NOW



THE GREASY STRANGLER ★★★★★

"Outrageous and infectious... Those with outré tastes might just find Jim Hosking's bad-taste comedy to be the funniest, grossest and, yes, greasiest film of the year."



AMERICAN HONEY ★★★★★

"Andrea Arnold fashions a loose, ragged American epic... immersive, euphoric and utterly addictive, it will leave you spent but ready to hit repeat. A modern classic."



SUPERSONIC ★★★★★

"Following Stone Roses movie *Spike Island*, Mat Whitecross helms a blistering celebration of more Manc-rock heroes with this Oasis doc."



UNDER THE SHADOW ★★★★★

"Full of shivers and subtext, this startling debut from writer/director Babak Anvari is scarily good. One of the films – horror or otherwise – of the year. Seek it out."

COMING SOON THE BIG HITTERS ON THE CARDS FOR NEXT ISSUE



FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

OUT 18 NOVEMBER

The Harry Potter brand's been busier this year than Hagrid's hairdresser: new theme-park openings, a West End play that's booked up until doomsday and now a big-screen spin-off/prequel/expanded-universe trilogy-starter. But instead of modern England, we're in pre-Depression New York, with the 'roar' in Roaring '20s likely coming from the beasts in Newt Scamander's (Eddie Redmayne) briefcase. Will we meet a young Dumbledore? Will we meet a young Dobby, canoodling with flappers at Gatsby-esque mega-soirees? Let's hope not. For more, see p13.



MOANA
OUT 2 DECEMBER

In a radical case of casting against type, Dwayne Johnson plays a huge muscly dude with mobile eyebrows in this latest Disney 'toon. The big question: will Alan Tudyk steal more scenes in *Rogue One* as an arsey robot, or here as a screaming rooster? For more, row, row, row your way to p17.



BAD SANTA 2
OUT 25 NOVEMBER

It's maybe a teeny bit worrying that director Mark Waters' last two films were *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and *Vampire Academy* (no, us neither). But here's hoping he can bring some of that *Mean Girls* bite to this belated Billy Bob follow-up. For more Thornton, jingle all the way to page 32.



ALLIED
OUT 25 NOVEMBER

After taking a tumble with *The Walk*, Robert Zemeckis should be on safer ground with this Pitt/Cotillard wartime rom-thriller. Scriptor Steven Knight has good form in intense drama: *Eastern Promises*, *Locke*, and that one where Jason Statham cops off with a nun. See you at the p18 rendezvous.

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MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR

MARVEL TAKES A 'HARD LEFT TURN' IN AN ATTEMPT TO COMBAT SUPERHERO FATIGUE WITH DOCTOR STRANGE, A SUPERNATURAL, PSYCHEDELIC MINDTRIP OF AN ORIGIN STORY. TOTAL FILM GOES WTF WITH MCU. ➡

WORDS MATT MAYTUM

DOCTOR STRANGE



65

COVER STORY



When *Total Film* catches up with *Doctor Strange* director Scott Derrickson, he's got just three VFX shots to tweak before his work on the film is done. It's the culmination of a journey that began more than two years ago when Derrickson (*The Exorcism Of Emily Rose*) was appointed director, the latest in a long line of offbeat helmer choices by Marvel. More than most Marvel Cinematic Universe properties, *Doctor Strange* requires a skewed perspective.

It's the studio's most untested launch since *Guardians Of The Galaxy*. Like that superteam, *Strange* isn't as well known to the public as some of Marvel's flagship stars, such as Captain America and Iron Man. Also like *Guardians*, it steps outside the familiar realm of Cap and Stark to explore a side

of the MCU less tethered to reality as we know it. "There's no scientific explanation for some of the things that you experience in the movie," laughs Derrickson. "It's just magic. I think part of what makes magic *magic*, and part of the appeal is the profound and inexplicable mystery of it."

According to Derrickson, *Doctor Strange* doesn't represent a risk or a gamble so much as a refusal to play it safe. "Because in this business, to play it safe is to fail," he says. "You have to evolve or die. I think that Marvel is smart enough to understand that it was time for the comic-book movie to evolve. Marvel, in particular, needed to take some hard left turns. I think *Guardians Of The Galaxy* was a hard left turn, and certainly *Doctor Strange* is a hard left turn. It's risky because it's new and it's weird and it's ambitious and bizarre. But I know that as a moviegoer, that's the kind of comic-book movie I want to see. And I think they feel that that's general audiences as well. They don't want to keep seeing the same thing over and over again."

While this year's *Captain America: Civil War* marked the climactic coming together (and falling apart) of many characters we've come to know over the course of a franchise of 13 films in the space of eight years, *Doctor Strange* is very much a sidestep in the MCU's trajectory. "It's definitely a big step outside of all of that, in the same way that the comic was a big step out of the



MCU when it appeared on the scene in the '60s," confirms the director. "It was a hard left turn for the comic universe." Celebrated artist and writer Steve Ditko created the character, and his trippy artwork left an indelible impression on readers, ensuring the comic was remembered as much for its insane visuals as its main character.

Dr. Stephen Strange is a sorcerer trained in magic and martial arts after his high-flying surgical career is cut short by an accident. In terms of his look (salt-and-pepper hair and goatee, swishy robes and cloak) and powers (energy projection, teleportation), he's an entirely different prospect to his helmet-wearing stablemates. For Marvel head honcho Kevin Feige – who's been willing the project into existence for many years – it's the ideal way to broaden the scope of the MCU.

"There is the cosmic level that *Thor* and *Guardians* and *Avengers* have taken us to, but there has always been a very important supernatural side to the Marvel comics, and we haven't really touched on that," say Feige. It's an opportunity to branch out in terms of both substance and style. "[*The comic*] brought in extra dimensions and it brought in the supernatural and it brought in the psychedelia of the '60s and all these visually ambitious things," adds Derrickson. "That's precisely what I have tried to do with the film."

EX-APPEAL

The love-interest is complicated, as *Strange* still works with his ex, played by Rachel McAdams.



DOCTOR STRANGE



Doctor Strange won't feel entirely unfamiliar though, as it'll be grounded in the archetypal origin story format that kicks off virtually every standalone superhero saga.

And of course, while the name Stephen Strange may not yet be hugely familiar to cinemagoers, the name Benedict Cumberbatch certainly is. Although, scheduling conflicts almost lost him the title role. "There was a huge space of time whereby I couldn't do it because of *Hamlet* [on stage] and *Sherlock*, which were sandwiching this project quite tightly," is how Cumberbatch remembers it. "But they worked it out and were graceful enough to move the shooting dates."

During that sandwich-filling time, other actors were considered. "We went and talked to a lot of other actors," says Derrickson. "After much consideration I went back to Kevin Feige and said, 'I just think it has to be Benedict,' because it just felt like a role that was so perfectly suited to him. There were other great actors that were interested in the role, and willing to do the role, I think. But none that I felt were going to bring to it the unique quality that

DOUBLE-ACT
Old friends
Cumberbatch and
Chiwetel Ejiofor take
their MCU places.



'PROBABLY THE BEST SOLO ORIGIN STORY OF ANY MARVEL CHARACTER'

KEVIN FEIGE

Doctor Strange is meant to be in the MCU." Rumours linked virtually every A-list actor aged 25-55 to the role, including Johnny Depp, Matthew McConaughey, Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Joaquin Phoenix. ("I love Joaquin, but he's not Doctor Strange," laughs Mads Mikkelsen when we float the idea.) Eventually, the film's release date was shifted from summer to autumn, to allow Cumberbatch to reclaim the role. "I also think it's good that it's a fall movie," says Derrickson, "I think somehow that season is more suited to this film."

Feige refers to Strange's beginnings as "probably the best solo origin story of any Marvel character," and that arc was something that appealed to Cumberbatch. "He does seem arrogant to the point of being unlikeable," says the 40-year-old Brit, "but yet, somehow, you do still like him. He's got a great deal of charm. There is a sense of

loss or soullessness about him very early on in the film. You see him as a lone figure at the beginning and end of this film. But by the end he's a superhero, and we all know that's quite an onerous task and often quite a solitary existence."

Strange starts the film as a vain neurosurgeon, more driven by his career achievements than his duty of care. At this stage of the story, he shares certain traits with another popular MCU character. "At the beginning of the movie he's got a kind of Tony Stark-esque charm about the fact that he knows what a dick he's being," smiles Cumberbatch. "But he doesn't shy away from it, so you sort of admire him for that."

A car accident robs Strange of the nerves in his hands, ending his medical career. That leads him on a path towards The Ancient One (Tilda Swinton), a mystic who will teach him to let go of his selfish ego and unlock hitherto untapped powers: harnessing energy, accessing alternate dimensions, folding space and time, the lot. "I think to have a superhero who begins by

COVER STORY

being complex and not immediately likeable is brave because it dares the audience to be a little bit in reserve,” muses Cumberbatch. “I’ve personally never liked the sort of vanillafication of characters that are a hero all the time from beginning to end. Give me edginess over cuteness any day!”

In keeping with *Doctor Strange*’s avoidance of the norm, his love interest plays out almost in reverse. Rachel McAdams is cast in the role of Doctor Christine Palmer, a character loosely adapted from the comics (with other characters amalgamated into the screen version). She’s a colleague of Strange’s, and they have history. “They are former boyfriend and girlfriend when we pick up in the story,” explains McAdams. “So we start at the end of their relationship, which is a little bit different. It’s not a classic love story, which I thought was really clever.”

Strange’s journey takes him from shiny hospitals in the west to the mountains surrounding Kathmandu, in Nepal. (Part of the reason why Kathmandu was chosen, Derrickson says, was to give the area a tourist boost following the 2015 earthquake). The spiritual side of the character’s arc was something Cumberbatch could closely relate to, having taught English in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery near Darjeeling some 20 years ago, during a gap year. “My mind as a 19-year-old was really blown open by all of that, so this material immediately made sense to me,” he says. It’s in Nepal that he meets Baron Karl Mordo (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor), a straight-up

supervillain in the comics who occupies a more ambiguous ally role as a fellow practitioner of the mystic arts in the film. “It’s a bit of a new take,” notes Derrickson. “Chiwetel’s very good at playing those kinds of characters who have a lot of subtext and hidden thoughts and feelings. That’s very much suited to him as an actor and that’s the kind of character that Mordo is.”

OLD-SCHOOL
Strange learns his magical talents from *The Ancient One*, played here by a baldy headed Tilda Swinton.

When we meet Ejiofor at London’s Covent Garden Hotel, he’s traded Mordo’s robes for the distinctly more smart-casual option of a jumper with dark blue jeans. “In the comic books, [Mordo]’s quite straightforward in a way,” he tells us, arms crossed. “He’s quite two-dimensional. So I thought that it was quite interesting to try to complicate somebody and to complicate a psychology.” Ejiofor and Cumberbatch have known each other for years, and previously worked together on Oscar-winner *12 Years A Slave*. “I don’t know if that’s exactly how he is in personality [in real life], but certainly all of the characters he plays seem to have a very questioning persona, searching for some other meaning to everything, beyond what’s in front of them,” says Ejiofor of his co-star. “I think that’s what makes him fun and interesting to watch because you really try to read into all of his motivations and his psychology. I don’t know how much of that is deliberate!” he chuckles.

Cumberbatch isn’t the only Benedict that Ejiofor shares scenes with in *Doctor Strange*, as he also reunites with fellow Brit Benedict Wong. “We were doing *The Martian* last time,” laughs Ejiofor.



DOCTOR STRANGE

STRANGE DOCTORS

Ranking the mad movie medics...

UTTERLY WEIRD

HERBERT WEST

Jeffrey Combs
Re-Animator, 1985



MOREAU

Marlon Brando
The Island Of Dr. Moreau, 1996

HENRY FRANKENSTEIN

Colin Clive
Frankenstein, 1931

VICTOR FRIES

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Batman & Robin, 1997

HENRY WU

B.D. Wong
Jurassic Park, 1993

EDWARD JESSUP

William Hurt
Altered States, 1980

CURTIS CONNORS

Rhys Ifans
The Amazing Spider-Man, 2012

CALIGARI

Werner Krauss
The Cabinet Of Dr. Caligari, 1920

ZAIUS

Maurice Evans
Planet Of The Apes, 1968

LAUREL WEAVER

Linda Fiorentino
Men In Black, 1997

BILL HARFORD

Tom Cruise
Eyes Wide Shut, 1999

DIANA REDDIN

Emma Thompson
Junior, 1994

RELATIVELY NORMAL



"So we turned up on set and were like, 'Hello again, mate. How are you doing? Where are we now? Mountains of Nepal? Fine.'" Wong plays, er, Wong, a mystic who oversees the library in Kamar-Taj, where the sorcerers are trained. Unlike the stereotypical 'manservant' of the comics, this modern take on the character finds him in drill-sergeant mode. Wong wasn't familiar with the comics, "but

The change in race attracted some controversy. Derrickson admits that it's a role they initially struggled with. "It wasn't until we came up with the idea of Tilda and wrote it for Tilda that it started to make sense," he explains. "I think it's two things. One of them is reckoning with the old-school, magical Asian stereotype of the comics – the Fu Manchu stereotype – and how little of that is really useful in terms of bringing

'I WAS ELATED. IT'S BEEN ON MY BUCKET LIST TO BE IN A MARVEL FILM'

BENEDICT WONG

doing my research and then seeing that there was a character called Wong, there was a natural calling that I had to do this for my ancestors," he deadpans. "If I'm thinking right, I play one of the first Asian characters [in the MCU]. So, I was absolutely elated. It's been on my bucket list to be in a Marvel film and now I'm taking it off, proudly."

Overseeing all in Kamar-Taj is The Ancient One, portrayed in the comics as a Tibetan man, but recast as a Celtic woman in the film (and played by a shiny-domed Tilda Swinton).

to life a modern-day movie character. But then also trying to think, 'OK, but this character needs to be a magical, mystical martial arts mentor to Doctor Strange, so how do we do that in a way that's not stereotypical and can still bring a diversity to the movie?'" After changing the race of that character, Wong was brought into the movie for balance (the character was excised in earlier drafts). As for what makes Swinton the right fit for The Ancient One, Derrickson explains that she has "vulnerability and authority and



COVER STORY



➔ mystery, and just an enigmatic air to her that makes you believe that she knows magic.”

While the combination of Mordo, Wong and The Ancient One gives Strange a considerable squad, the villainy in the film comes in the form of Mads Mikkelsen, as Kaecilius, another student of The Ancient One. As to how and why he leaves the fold, everyone’s keeping schtum for now. “Well, I can say he’s called Kaecilius,” Mikkelsen tells us. “I can say he is at Kamar-Taj, meaning he is... he’s one of the... ah, that might even be too much.” Describing the character as “ambiguous”, Mikkelsen does at least concede that he’s the big bad of the piece. “It’s fair to call him the villain, obviously, because he is the opposition to Doctor Strange,” he continues. “Having said that, as with all good villains, he is not mad. He is speaking up his case, and his case makes a lot

of sense.” Try to get Mikkelsen to speak about the powers his character has, and he suggests with a laugh, “Let’s talk about my childhood.”

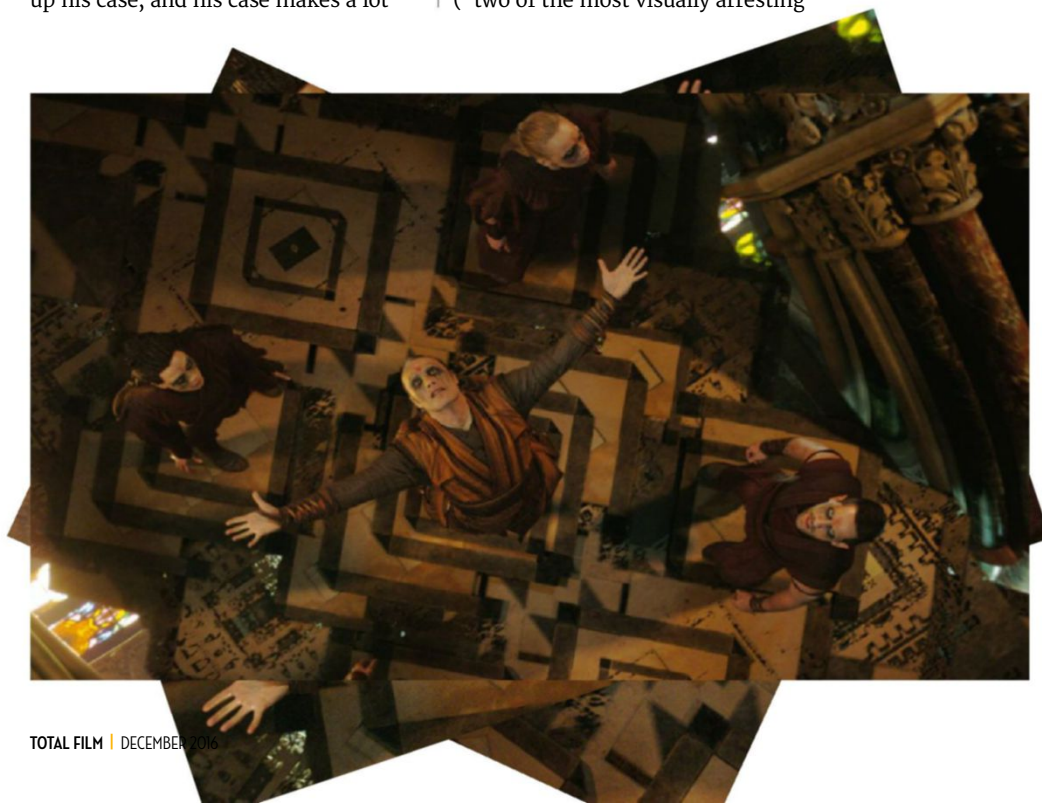
If the footage seen so far is anything to go by, his evil plan involves rolling New York up like a life-sized map and going kaleidoscopic on the streets. Despite being populated with character actors and mysticism, *Doctor Strange* will still be very much a big blockbuster in the Marvel tradition. Derrickson describes Steve Ditko’s art as “paramount” to the inspiration behind the film’s visuals. “Anybody who really knows Ditko’s work in the early *Strange* comics will leave the theatre knowing that was the primary influence on the visual look of the film.” In terms of movies, Derrickson points to *The Matrix* and *Inception* (“two of the most visually arresting

MADS BAD

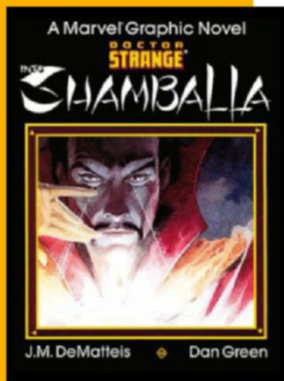
The big bad in *Doctor Strange*’s filmic debut is Mads Mikkelsen’s grim-eyed brooder, Kaecilius.

and ambitious movies of maybe the last 25 years”) as influences. “I felt that both of those were at the tip of a very interesting special effects iceberg,” he says. “And I wanted to delve deeper into that iceberg in a more psychedelic way, and do something that audiences haven’t seen yet.” Derrickson expresses surprise that no other film has tried to build upon *Inception*’s visuals since it opened six years ago, and hopes that the style of *Doctor Strange*’s colossal action will help to separate it from the pack. “What I liked about [Inception] specifically was it was using big-budget blockbuster visual effects to do something other than destroy,” he explains. “It was more than mass destruction. I, for one, have grown weary of blockbuster movies being filled with only massive explosions and destruction and gunfire. I really wanted *Doctor Strange* to be a movie that utilised effects and movie magic to do something else.”

For all of the film’s mind (and cityscape)-bending visuals, it was grounded in the real world as much as possible, from the location shooting in Nepal and NYC, to the elaborate sets



DOCTOR STRANGE



RECOMMENDED READING

Scott Derrickson on the Doctor Strange comics to brush up on...

"I would make three recommendations. Marvel has issued a bunch of the *Doctor Strange* comics in hardback volumes. The *DOCTOR STRANGE #1* has the original *Strange Tales* in which Strange was first introduced, and where his origin story was first told, and then that goes into the first *Doctor Strange* title comics.

All of the stuff that was done by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko together. That is far and away the primary source of both visual and storytelling inspiration for the movie that we made. And I also think having read all of the *Doctor Strange* comics, I think those were the best. I think they're still unsurpassed.

But there were two graphic novels that had an influence on me, both in the writing of the script and in the visual design of the movie, and that's *THE OATH* graphic novel and *INTO SHAMBALLA*, which is probably the most visually beautiful of all the graphic novels. The visuals are actual watercolour paintings, and they're gorgeous.

So I'd say those two graphic novels, and all the Stan Lee/Steve Ditko stuff. If you read all of that, you're going to have a perfect base from which to see the film."

built for the temple interiors and Strange's lair, the Sanctum Sanctorum. "It's going to be a mind-blowingly beautiful film as well as a stunning visual effects fest," Cumberbatch beams. "That's in no small part thanks to the extraordinary construction of these beautiful sets and everything that's in them. Also, the prop department made and maintained some beautiful objects that are works

year – needed to get in superhero shape rather than relying on a synthespian body double.

"In films I've done before there have been elements of action, but to be up front and centre playing the title lead, the amount of action in that is new to me," he says. The role required a level of training beyond anything he'd previously experienced. "I started working out for this film, not just to be

'THE AMOUNT OF ACTION WAS NEW TO ME. I STARTED WORKING OUT'

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH

of art in themselves and inspiring to play with." For the actor, the location shooting helped ground some of the film's more out-there elements. "A lot of this film benefitted from that," he says. "Scott Derrickson's mission was to give as much real-world, live-action as possible, so that everything that's so fantastical about this story can still have a basis in reality." Real-world action meant Cumberbatch – who became a father for the first time last

bigger to fill the suit – so to speak – of being this superhero, but also for endurance, to be able to take knocks, to be able to do multiple takes of fight scenes over five days and to do an action sequence at the end of the film. You have to have great core strength. You have to be able to hold yourself well. That training started before I played Hamlet, which was a sort of shred every night – three hours of cardiovascular workout. Then during



LOOK AT MY EYES
Benedict Cumberbatch brings his trademark intensity to the role.

COVER STORY



➔ the day I'd be working out for this film and rehearsing for this film and looking after a baby. That keeps you fit and awake."

Supershape isn't everything though, and Strange is one MCU hero who has as many weaknesses as strengths. If he had of been around at the time *Civil War* was kicking off, it's hard to tell how he would have fared against established Avengers. Could he have just folded them into another dimension? "I think that part of what makes Strange really

film, piecing it together as throughout his training and as his skills develop, eventually getting his hands on the rather snazzy Cloak of Levitation. "It feels like a composite as he gets more and more complete as the film goes on," explains Cumberbatch of his costume. "He earns every single item of clothing and every prop. So both with the clothing and the gravitas of his face, the designers wanted to mark that progression very clearly. It was very important for us to be able to build story through those details." But there's another key reason why his costume is so important, when you

'IF YOU SLICE HIM WITH A POCKET KNIFE HE'LL BLEED. HE'S JUST A GUY'
SCOTT DERRICKSON

interesting as a superhero is he's both more and less powerful than almost all superheroes," considers Derrickson. "More powerful in the sense that he has access to other dimensions and other dimensional powers, and can make magic. But at the same time, physically when utilising that power, he's just a guy. He's a guy without any armour. He's a guy without a super-body like Captain America who can jump from a plane into the ocean. If you slice him with a pocket knife, he'll cut and bleed. He's just a guy. So the combination of this extreme power and extreme vulnerability is part of what makes him unique."

While Strange doesn't have a suit of armour, he will be assembling his own unique outfit over the course of the

consider Strange will be stepping into the wider MCU at some point (and *Thor: Ragnarok* set photos hinting that the Norse God will be heading to the address of the Sanctum Sanctorum suggest it won't be long before this soloist joins the ensemble). Kevin Feige says, "It needed to be iconic in its own right. It needed to be very different from any of the other Avengers because Doctor Strange will most likely find himself standing one day next to Tony Stark, next to Thor, next to the other Avengers. So we wanted him to very much feel a part of the broader team and yet completely individualised and separate from anybody else."

Somehow, we don't think he's going to have any trouble standing out.

DOCTOR STRANGE OPENS ON 25 OCTOBER.

CHIWETEL EJIOFOR

The actor behind Baron Mordo talks comics, Cumberbatch and graphic content...

How did you get involved with *Doctor Strange*?

I'd actually spoken to people at Marvel and Kevin Feige – just a few meetings over the years about the projects that they were doing. We were both keen to find a way of finding a way into the Marvel Universe. Then at some point, we started talking about *Doctor Strange* and Mordo, and it just sort of evolved from there.

Were you a fan of comics growing up?

My comic book background was all like 2000 AD. And I loved Alan Moore. I remember going into a Waterstones or something back then in Richmond and asking if they had a graphic novel section. The guy looked at me. He actually said, "We don't do that sort of thing here, sir." He thought I was talking about porn. [laughs] It's just amazing how things have evolved since then

So what was it like working with your old friend Benedict Cumberbatch, then?

I've known Benedict for a long time. He's always just been terrific. He's a great actor, and it's been amazing in the last few years to see him, through *Sherlock*, turn into this phenomenon that he has become, which is really great. He's an exceptionally talented guy. He's a good friend, so what can I say, really? [laughs] He's a great guy and he's very easy to work with.

So what does a director like Scott Derrickson – who's much better known for horror – bring to a project like this?

It's a very precise art, I think, directing horror. And so, to be skilled at that is to have a lot of understanding of how to guide an audience through an experience. With something like this – which is a really complicated experience in the sense that it's very new stuff – to guide an audience through all that just takes a lot of skill.

The Mordo of the comics is a villain, which is not where the film character starts. Is that something you keep in mind?

I think you can only play the part – any part – in terms of the universe and the world that the script contains. You can look at previous material to create a nice, interesting subtextual layer of your character, but you don't want to be particularly overt with those things because I think they're confusing if not everybody in the audience has read all of the original books of *Doctor Strange*.

You starred in *Serenity* for Joss Whedon.

Did he give you any tips for surviving the MCU?

He didn't, no. I did see him, because I did a show in London and he came to see it. So we hung out for a bit afterwards, but he didn't really mention it. I don't think either of us brought it up. Maybe I should have. I think for everybody, it's always such a different experience. Obviously for him, he was writing and directing. I would have felt embarrassed to be like, "Any advice?" [laughs] **JF**

DOCTOR STRANGE

LEARNING THE ROPES

Doctor Strange at the magical early learning centre with Baron Mordo.



“WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO UNTIL WE ACCEPT THE POWER OF A WOMAN”

She's the French megastar who's conquered Hollywood to win an Oscar and work with Mann, Soderbergh and Nolan. And now **MARION COTILLARD** is smashing more boundaries with *Assassin's Creed*, *Allied* and sexual-awakening drama *From The Land Of The Moon*. Total Film meets a real power player...

WORDS JAMIE GRAHAM PORTRAITS BEN HASSETT

Marion Cotillard is exhausted. You'd never know it to look at her – sitting on a sun-soaked rooftop terrace at the Cannes Film Festival, her tousled hair and grin create an illusion of relaxation – but the past year has taken its toll.

Already feeling hollowed out from playing Lady Macbeth opposite Michael Fassbender in Justin Kurzel's blood-and-thunder adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy ("She was the darkest character I've ever had to experience; super-heavy"), Cotillard then embarked on five back-to-back movies. Three of them are French: voicing the lead in beguiling animation *April And The Extraordinary World*; playing a free-spirit trapped in a loveless marriage in *From The Land Of The Moon*; and dialling the anguish up to 11 in Xavier Dolan's

vicious family reunion drama, *It's Only The End Of The World*. The other two are Hollywood blockbusters: re-teaming with Kurzel and Fassbender in action-adventure *Assassin's Creed*; and playing a French Resistance fighter in Robert Zemeckis' WW2 action-drama *Allied*.

"I have to understand where the love and passion and suffering and laughter come from, so I always need go back to the childhood to find keys, or to invent them," she explains of her deep-dive process to find each and every character. "Some things come right away, and some come with exploring deeper and deeper – the heart and soul of the character." But such an intense exploration cannot be exited cleanly. "When you spend your days being someone different, it affects you," she says. "I'm not a method actor, but when I go home at night, there's something







I carry. I cannot just go back to myself. It takes two, three, four weeks. Everyone around me knows there might be shadows, sometimes.”

The suffering is visible – today, as she talks, Cotillard is wringing her hands on the table before her. “The past year, I didn’t live my life at all,” she continues. “Every day I was someone different. It’s an experience that I was glad to have but that I will never experience again. It’s too much. A question of sanity. But I did it. I said yes because they were irresistible. But the period of time to go back to myself was gone. I was close to quitting one movie because I was empty. But I couldn’t because I had worked with the director already and loved it so much.”

The movie she is referring to is *Assassin’s Creed: Total Film* actually met Cotillard on the Pinewood set in 2015. That day she was focused on the work, and having a dictaphone stuck in her face was clearly a distraction for she was not her usual smiling, star-wattage self. Now, it becomes apparent, she was exhausted, though she stresses that the experience and movie will be worth it.

“I thought the script was really, really good,” she says, the grin cracking once more to showcase those big square teeth. “I’m not familiar with the videogame at all, but Justin is one of the greatest directors of actors I’ve worked with, so I knew that this adventure would be a big studio movie but also intimate and profound.”

Created by Ubisoft, the videogames dive back into different periods of history to track the centuries-old fight between the Assassins, who strive for peace with free will, and the Templars, who desire peace through control. Kurzel’s film will feature an original story that expands the mythology, as career criminal Callum Lynch (Fassbender) is forced to participate in a project that has him explore the

memories of his ancestor Aguilar de Nerha (Fassbender again), an Assassin during the Spanish Inquisition. Cue flashbacks full of fisticuffs, while the modern-day sequences will see Callum, equipped with a new skillset, take up the fight as the war rages on.

Cotillard plays Dr. Sophia Rikkin, a researcher at Abstergo Industries and daughter of CEO Alan Rikkin (Jeremy Irons), who happens to be a high-ranking member of the Templar Order. “I thought it was very interesting to explore the mind of a scientist who thinks that she can cure violence with science,” she says. “I relate to her – I mean, that desire to end violence. The movie has all of these science-fiction ideas about it, which I thought was really cool. That’s what I like about movies – I like to be part of very realistic projects, like the Dardenne brothers’ movie [Two Days, One Night] or Jacques Audiard’s movie [Rust And Bone] or even James Gray’s movie [The Immigrant], and then suddenly you jump into a totally different reality.”

Born on 30 September 1975 in Paris to actor, playwright and director Jean-Claude Cotillard and actress/teacher Niseema Theilland, Marion appeared in her dad’s plays as a child and studied at Conservatoire d’Art Dramatique in Paris. In 1993, aged 17, she appeared in a few episodes of the *Highlander* TV series, and broke into movies in 1996 with Arnaud Desplechin’s *Ma Vie Sexuelle* and Coline Serreau’s *La Belle Verte*. Her first big role came two years later in action-comedy *Taxi*, written and produced by Luc Besson, while sequels *Taxi 2* and *Taxi 3* further introduced her to international audiences. She made her Hollywood debut with Tim Burton’s *Big Fish* (2003).

Cotillard’s career was gaining unstoppable momentum: there followed a César Award for Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s *A Very Long Engagement*; a romance with Russell Crowe’s investment broker in Ridley Scott’s pastoral comedy *A Good Year*; and then, in 2007, a stunning turn as celebrated cabaret singer Édith Piaf in *La Vie En Rose*. This last saw her join Sophia Loren (*Two Women*) as the only actresses in history to win an Academy Award for a performance not in the English language.

“I’ve never done this job to win awards,” she shrugs, plucking at her



ABOVE
Cotillard goes back in time with *Allied*; and stars with Michael Fassbender in *Assassin’s Creed*.

BELOW
With Alex Brendemühl in *From The Land Of The Moon*.

floral top and smoothing down a skirt of iridescent gold. “I think when you’re a runner and every runner is on the same line and going to run the same race, then competition might make sense. It doesn’t make sense to have a competition between movies, actors, directors...” She pauses, gathers her thoughts. “I’m not saying that I don’t care – I appreciate when I win an award – but, for me, competition doesn’t make any sense.”

An Oscar certainly makes career sense, though, and Cotillard’s since juggled tour-de-force arthouse titles (*Little White Lies*, *Rust And Bone*) with US movies that include *Public Enemies* for Michael Mann, *Inception* and *The Dark Knight Rises* for Christopher Nolan, and *Contagion* for Steven Soderbergh.

Another smile, another shrug. “I don’t plan anything,” she says. “I’m just lucky to have offers that are very different. That was my dream when I was a kid and when I wanted to be an actress. I just take what comes. If I do an American movie, it’s amazing to me; and I still can’t believe Jacques Audiard or Arnaud Desplechin offer me roles.”

She’s the only one questioning it, for when it comes to making emotional connections with characters, she plugs into the mains. Cotillard guarantees truthfulness and fearlessness, and rarely have these qualities been more



“NOTHING COUNTS MORE THAN EXPERIENCING PASSION AND LOVE”

in evidence than in *From The Land Of The Moon*. Based on Milena Agus' novel *Mal Di Pietre*, it's set in the South of France after World War 2, a time when the sexuality of heroine Gabrielle is viewed as evidence of a diseased mind.

I sympathise with anyone who is not allowed by society to be who they want to be," she says. "I've never experienced that in my life – my parents gave me total freedom. But I know people who still today have to deal with a childhood where they were put in a box." She sighs. "I think Gabrielle carries sexuality and love in herself, in a very raw, wild way. There's nothing that counts more than experiencing passion and love."

Does she feel that women can now express their sexuality as freely as men, or do the double standards still hold? "Not yet!" she cries. "We still have a *looong* way to go until we accept the power of a woman. It's very powerful. Maybe that's why it's still scary. But there's definitely an evolution that goes a little faster than in the '50s."

Our time is up and Cotillard is getting ready to exit the rooftop terrace on six-inch heels. But first she wants to share a few words on *Allied*, in which she plays an assassin after watching Fassbender handle the action in *Assassin's Creed*. "Yeah, there was a little bit more action for me in the Zemeckis movie!" she laughs. "He's a genius and a visionary, and Brad Pitt is such an incredible actor." Cotillard and Pitt's characters fall in love while on a mission to kill a German official in Casablanca. Expect suspense and spectacle aplenty, but it is the moral quandaries and questions of identity that held the most appeal.

"It's about the fight to find your place in the world," she says, pausing at the door. "In the time of war, your place in the world is questioned. Are you going to survive? What are you going to do about what's happening around you? The decisions you make will change your life forever. And what happens when, in the middle of this, you fall in love?" What, indeed? Well, one thing's for sure: whatever it turns out to be, Cotillard will sell it with conviction and charisma.

ALLIED OPENS ON 25 NOVEMBER.
ASSASSIN'S CREED OPENS ON 1 JANUARY.
FROM THE LAND OF THE MOON IS TBC.



Hero or traitor? Whistleblower Edward Snowden has been fêted and hated after revealing the NSA's surveillance secrets. Total Film meets **OLIVER STONE** and **JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT** to get a top-secret briefing on how to make a movie about one of the 21st Century's most divisive figures.

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

For a man who takes his and other people's privacy very seriously, Edward Snowden has become something of a reluctant star of late. The world's most famous whistleblower was at the centre of Laura Poitras' Oscar-winning documentary *Citizenfour*. He's appeared in several plays, including *Privacy* – reading Shakespeare alongside Daniel Radcliffe. And now he's the subject of a major new movie, *Snowden*, by Hollywood's most polemical director, Oliver Stone.

A former analyst at the NSA (National Security Agency), Snowden's revelations about Orwellian US Government mass-surveillance left him branded a hero in some quarters, a traitor in others. This North Carolina native, though, never wanted to take centre stage. "He's embarrassed it's all about the messenger in the media, as opposed to the message," says Stone, when *Total Film* catches up with the director at the Zurich Film Festival. "He never wanted to bring attention to himself. But he had to."

Featuring Joseph Gordon-Levitt in the title role, *Snowden* might yet prove the

most important of Stone's career – a body-of-work that has persistently seen him criticise presidential administrations (*J.F.K.*, *W*, *Nixon*). "Oliver is the only person who could make this film," argues *Divergent* star Shailene Woodley, who plays Snowden's girlfriend Lindsay Mills. "Oliver is the only person in Hollywood who has the balls to make the movies that he's made and to question our government."

Since its September premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival, Stone's film has become the focal point in the ongoing debate to pardon Snowden. Exiled in Russia, after the US cancelled his passport as he was transiting through the Eastern European giant on his way to Latin America, Snowden must remain there or face jail-time in America. His crime? To meet with Poitras and *The Guardian* journalists Glenn Greenwald and Ewen MacAskill in a Hong Kong hotel, handing over classified documents.

The resulting story, which claimed the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, led to some of the biggest revelations of the 21st Century. Chiefly, that the NSA was using elaborate computer technology to



HACK

SNOWDEN

CLASSIFIED

79

WATCH

MAKING OF

➔ not just spy on suspected terrorists but on everyone, snooping e-mails, social media and even webcams. “The NSA is not talked about,” says Stone. “There’s no-one who really has been inside – except for [fellow whistleblowers] Bill Binney and Tom Drake – revealing and talking, until Snowden.”

Surprisingly, Stone was initially hesitant about taking on Snowden’s story, even after the first of several trips to Moscow in January 2014, where his subject is now stationed. “I was drawn to this material – I was curious,” he says, “but I was not sure it would be a right movie to do. The nature of the news changes; it was a case that was volatile. Usually, you don’t follow current affairs. You have to keep a distance.”

Accompanying Stone on one trip was Gordon-Levitt. Famed for his work in *Inception* and *The Dark Knight Rises*, the actor “did not know very much” of the Snowden scandal until he began his research (including repeat listens to *Citizenfour*’s audio on his headphones). “That’s a kind of courage I’ve never personally experienced. I admire him for it. I find it fascinating. It made for a very intriguing character to play as an actor.”

Portraying Snowden the man is what characterises Stone’s film. Co-scripted with Kieran Fitzgerald (who co-wrote Tommy Lee Jones’ *The Homesman*), the film is based on Luke Harding’s book *The Snowden Files: The Inside Story Of The World’s Most Wanted Man* and *Time Of The Octopus*, a fictional tale of an American whistleblower written by Anatoly Kucherena, the Russian human rights lawyer who helped secure Snowden’s asylum.

Unlike *Citizenfour*, which concentrates on Snowden’s life-changing encounters with Greenwald,



WHISTLEBLOWER

Gordon-Levitt travelled to Russia to meet the real Edward Snowden.

‘EVERY MAJOR STUDIO PASSED. IT WAS A FEAR OF TELLING [SNOWDEN’S] STORY. IT WAS TOO CONTROVERSIAL.’

OLIVER STONE

MacAskill and Poitras in June 2013, Stone’s film is a sprawling biopic spanning the decade before the crucial exchange in Hong Kong’s Mira Hotel. Using this to anchor the movie, *Snowden* flashes back to earlier years, beginning in 2004, when – inspired by 9/11 – he enrolls in the US Army Reserve. When a leg injury curtails his military career, Snowden joins the CIA.

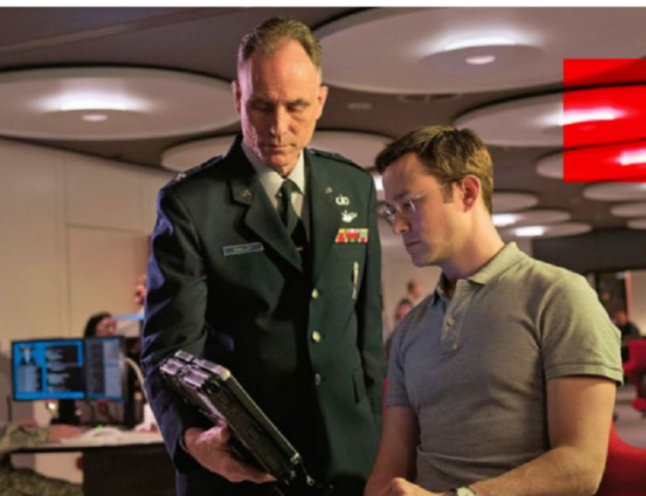
Perhaps it’s no surprise this techie decided to fight the war against terror. “His father was in the Coast Guard, his grandfather was in the FBI,” explains Gordon-Levitt. “His mother worked for the government. He was really brought up to believe that what the American government does is right – it’s why he enlisted in the US army,

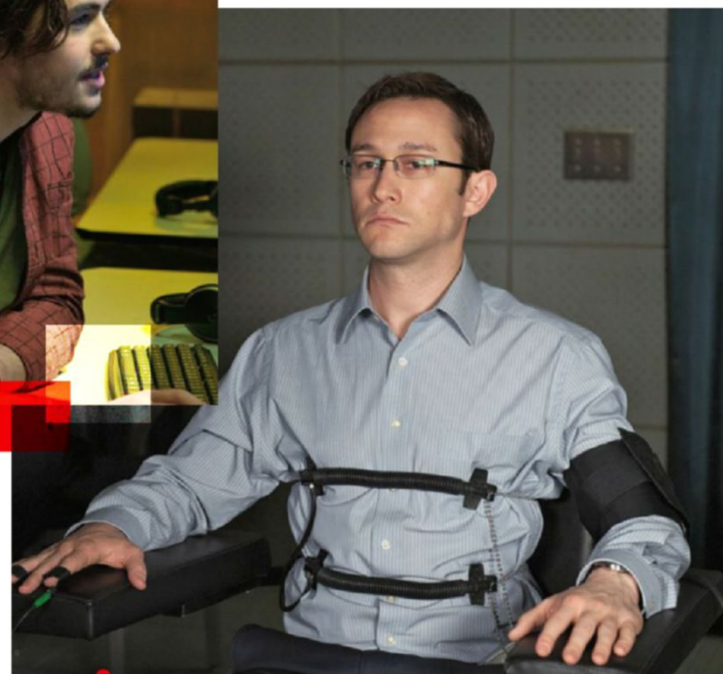
to fight in Iraq. He goes from one type of patriotism, where you think everything your country does is right without asking any questions, to another kind of patriotism, where you do ask those questions.”

It’s this portrait of a patriot that may surprise those who only know him as a whistleblower. “We all have strong opinions about Edward Snowden, but we didn’t know the person behind the poster child,” says Woodley. “Very few people can relate to working for a government, let alone the NSA or CIA. But everyone can relate to love, everyone can relate to sacrifice and everyone can relate to being in a situation where you know something wrong is occurring.”

Certainly, Snowden’s long-term relationship with liberal photographer Lindsay Mills embodies this. While the NSA man couldn’t divulge the nature of his work to his girlfriend, as she accompanied him to postings in Tokyo and Hawaii, the more he uncovered, the more it impacted upon their time together. Eventually, when Snowden goes rogue, leaving Mills as he heads to Hong Kong, it left her exposed as the woman behind the whistleblower.

Woodley met Mills three months into filming. “To have the strength that Lindsay possesses is really rare... in the face of all that adversity, she remained self-aware to the point where she didn’t fight back against mass media. There’s a reason why we don’t know much about her until this movie, because she led a private life even though the whole





world wanted to know who she was. When I met her, I was trying to be very aware and cautious of that.”

Despite an international cast including Zachary Quinto (as Greenwald), Tom Wilkinson (MacAskill) and Melissa Leo (Poitras), Stone faced huge problems when he sought financing in Hollywood. “Every major studio passed. It was dead. It was basically a fear, a fear of telling that story. Too much controversy. You have to realise that in the United States, Snowden was not regarded positively as he was abroad. Anybody who spills secrets, anybody who blows a whistle was regarded suspiciously. It’s a conformist society.”

With Stone – a three-time Oscar winner (for scripting *Midnight Express* and directing his Vietnam-era movies *Platoon* and *Born On The Fourth Of July*) – recently turning 70, *Snowden* marks his 20th feature film. Yet even with such credentials, he was forced to find money from France and Germany (the film was largely shot in Munich). “It bothered me that this is a story that is important to our time, he was an important figure and they said, ‘No’. It made our job much more difficult.”

It didn’t help that reviews have been mixed. While trade paper *Variety* called it “the most important and galvanising political drama by an American filmmaker in years”, others were less kind. Even *The Guardian*, the paper at the centre of Snowden’s leaks, took him to task for offering “an unbearably Hollywoodised retelling of a narrative

that requires no gloss whatsoever”. “The reception was very tough but that’s been the story for all my films,” shrugs Stone.

While there can be no doubt Stone paints Snowden as a white knight for his actions, others are out to dispute this reading. Journalist Edward Jay Epstein, writer of the forthcoming book *How America Lost Its Secrets: Edward Snowden, The Man And The Theft*, argued in the *Wall Street Journal* that “only a handful of the secrets [taken by Snowden] had anything to do with domestic surveillance by the government”, citing one government official who suggested Snowden was “definitely under the influence of Russian officials”.

Whatever the truth, his actions undeniably opened up a debate about privacy. Recently, Gordon-Levitt’s online collaborative production company HitRECORD joined forces with the American Civil Liberties Union – a partnership funded by the actor’s fee for *Snowden*, which he donated – to make a series of short films, asking the question: ‘What do you think of technology and democracy?’ Some were optimistic. In the Gordon-Levitt directed *It’s Only Getting Better*, Snowden contributes, claiming: “I think technology will improve things.”

Meanwhile, for those that value their privacy, you can always follow Snowden’s method

PATRIOT GAMES

(top) Snowden with NSA agent Gabriel Sol (Ben Schnetzer); (above right) taking the CIA test; (below) as an army recruit.

– and stick a plaster where it counts. “Putting a band-aid over your webcam only scratches the surface of addressing this big question,” warns Gordon-Levitt. “It’s [about] everything we do every single day,” adds Woodley. “Technology is beautiful and innovative and it’s helping humanity, but it’s also something we need to learn how to utilise in order to protect ourselves.”

What will happen to Snowden remains to be seen. In September, a letter unanimously signed by all of the Republicans and Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee urged the President not to pardon him. Gordon-Levitt, an Obama voter, remains unimpressed. “He hasn’t been very strong as far as curbing these illegal systems of mass surveillance. Even though I still support him as President, I think it’s worth holding him accountable for that.”

Stone compares the US Government’s attitude to mass surveillance to the way the Nazi party began passing laws to “protect... at any cost” the German people. “We’re an uninformed public,” he says. “The government tells us, ‘This is for your security.’ They keep insisting. I would like proof of that – some demonstrable proof that surveying everyone in the world has done us any good. On the contrary, I believe it has harmed us and confused us.” It’s a debate that will rage for years.

SNOWDEN IS EXPECTED TO OPEN NEXT YEAR.





MAN IN THE IRON MASK

ADAM DRIVER is more than Star Wars buckethead Kylo Ren. Total Film talks to the versatile actor about becoming a Hollywood force to be reckoned with. **WORDS** MATT MAYTUM **PORTRAIT** SIMON EMMETT



Adam Driver might not be on *Star Wars* duty today, but his get-up could be described as off-duty Dark Side. Dressed head-to-toe in black (t-shirt, jeans, trainers), there's not one pop of colour in his entire

outfit. It's easy to imagine Kylo Ren wearing this if the First Order ever had Casual Friday on Starkiller Base.

It's September 2016, and *Total Film* meets Driver in the Fairmont Royal York hotel in the middle of the Toronto International Film Festival. He's in town with *Paterson*, a Jim Jarmusch movie that couldn't be further from the blockbuster spectacle of *Star Wars*. Must have been quite a change of pace, if this was the first movie he did, post-*Force Awakens*? "Erm... I'm trying to think if this was the first thing that I did after *Star Wars*," he ponders, his low voice rumbling. "Yeah, it was, actually. What attracted me to it was Jim Jarmusch, because I think he's brilliant

and one of the best filmmakers alive. The scale of it didn't matter to me."

Not that Driver – one of the breakout favourites of the new instalment in the saga, along with Daisy Ridley – felt the scale on *Episode VII*. "I kind of lucked out, though, in the whole *Star Wars*, huge franchise, blockbuster movie," he continues. "Even though it was all those things, because J.J. was directing it, it still felt like an independent movie to me. I mean, I noticed the catering being way better." He breaks into a chuckle. "The trailers are way better. But when you're working on it – obviously, you don't take jobs for food and trailers. The collaborating on it, and making something hopefully specific, is what's exciting. So even though the scales were way different [on *Star Wars* and *Paterson*], the way I was working on them seemed the same."

From the outside, though, *Paterson*'s titular character is a completely different proposition to Kylo Ren. Forget lightsaber tantrums and space rage,





Paterson is as calm and introspective as they come. He's a bus driver, working the route in the New Jersey hometown that bears his name. Between shifts, he scribbles poetry, musing on everyday wonders like matches and twins, often inspired by snatched snippets of his passengers' overheard conversations. After his shift ends, he returns home to the house he shares with his wife Laura (Golshifteh Farahani), before heading out for a single pint at the local bar, his bulldog Marvin in tow. Paterson's a quiet, contemplative figure whose structured, straightforward life gains its own sort of poetic rhythm through Jarmusch's lens. One could be tempted to draw parallels between Paterson and the 'un-Hollywood' Driver.

"In some ways [*I relate to the character*]," he explains. "It was such a great thing to play a character whose main activity is to listen. It's bold on Jim's part to know that that's cinematic enough, that listening is interesting. Watching someone think is powerful

enough to hopefully sustain a movie." He pauses briefly. "But I also relate to how he was very structured in his life, because acting is very nomadic, clearly. And you have to travel around, and you desperately seek a routine and structure, so when you go to do your job, you can kind of drift or float away, and then come back to this self-imposed structure that you put on everything. I understand that."

In the flesh, Driver is something of a contradiction – imposing, but entirely unthreatening. He towers at 6ft 3in, with an extremely broad frame, thick arms clenched to his sides throughout. There's that deep voice, too. His face doesn't have quite the same abstract quality in person – his nose is clearly magnified by the camera – but he still has a leonine quality, accentuated by the black mane that rests at his shoulders, and the goatee adorning his chin. He's stayed in shape since joining the Marines, post-9/11 (after serving for more than two-and-a-half

'THE MYTH OF STAR WARS CAN BE OVERWHELMING, BUT PEOPLE REMIND YOU IT'S WORK'

years, he was discharged with a broken sternum before his unit was deployed to Iraq). Born in California in 1983 but raised in Indiana, Driver applied for the prestigious Juilliard School after high school, but didn't get in the first time. He reapplied – successfully – after his time in the Marines, running five miles a day to get to class. It's one of many hints at how driven he is beneath the mask of nonchalant-cool.



And if anything has defined his rigorous work ethic, it's been his pursuit of collaborating with the best directors in the business; auteurs with unique voices and unwavering control. On his budding

filmography are credits for the likes of Steven Spielberg, Clint Eastwood, the Coen brothers, Jeff Nichols and Noah Baumbach. Director Jim Jarmusch was what attracted him to *Paterson*, after all. "I totally believe that [*film*]'s a director's medium and the director should have total control over what it is," explains Driver. "Making art by committee doesn't make any sense to me. I guess it's a committee in that everyone who's there is making it and working on it. But some figurehead in the background calling shots makes no sense. It's a director's medium. He's the storyteller. We're there to serve whatever story he's trying to tell."

Talking of directors in charge of their medium, Driver has two upcoming features helmed by modern greats. Already in the can is *Silence*, a long-gestating epic by Martin Scorsese, in which Driver plays a Jesuit priest spreading the word of Christianity in 17th Century Japan. And still filming is 'hillbilly heist' movie *Logan Lucky*, Steven Soderbergh's 'comeback' picture (after a pleasingly brief retirement). So how did working with those guys live up to the expectations of such a director-driven actor? "Above and beyond. With Scorsese, I think it's a natural impulse to come in and be like, 'Tell me what you want to do, and

DARK KNIGHT

Driver's Kylo Ren gave *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* its dark heart.





I'll do it.'" He smiles. "But he doesn't want that. He wants you to challenge him and have your own opinions and take ownership over what you're doing. Someone who's accomplished that much and is still interested in collaborating is a rare thing."

Although, in Driver's case, it's not that rare. "[It's] the same thing with Soderbergh, in a completely opposite way," he adds. "He's all about not creating any hierarchy, where everybody is pitching the best ideas. When they turn to you and are like, 'What do you think? I'm giving you ownership,' you have to rise to the occasion. They don't want to work in a bubble. They enjoy the collaborative process. It's an actor-y thing to say, but it's very true."

For someone who spent his formative years gorging on classic cinema, Driver seems unfazed about sharing his input with his current crop of co-workers. "Initially [it's nerve-wracking], but it goes away when you have to do your job," he says. "It's the same thing with *Star Wars*. The myth of it can be overwhelming. There are people who are very approachable and demystified. They just want to remind you very quickly that it's work. 'I hired you for your opinions, so I want to get them.' That's a lucky thing to experience, I'd say."

ABOVE
Driver stars opposite Golshifteh Farahani in *Paterson*.

BELOW
He'll return to *Girls* for one last season next year.

If 'luck' does have anything to do with it, Driver's streak started when he landed the role of Adam Sackler in Lena Dunham's hit HBO show, *Girls*. The role offered him exposure (in all senses of the word) as the NYC-set show became the natural successor to *Sex And The City*, and a talking-point phenomenon around the world.

Girls comes to an end when the sixth and final season airs next year. Driver's emotions are mixed. "It's very strange," he says. "It's sad. It's good. I've never done something for six years – a job, playing one character for six years, and it's always kind of been in the back of my mind, even when you work on other things. It's all bittersweet. It's all good, but definitely the last day is very sad."

Some of the early risqué scenes in *Girls* established Driver's commitment to his craft; he laughs off the suggestion that anyone might have talked him out of any of the more R-rated content: "I believed in what Lena was after and going for. And I'm an actor. I understood showing the ugly parts and things like sex in a different light. It wasn't nudity or graphic sex for the sake of it. There was a story behind it. That I could get behind."

With so much on his slate, you can almost forget that the 32-year-old has the small matter of *Episode VIII* coming up. Starring in a trilogy that kicked off with \$2bn at the box office is enough to give any actor's clout a force-boost; Driver's post-*Star Wars* bankability has been praised by Terry Gilliam (his involvement in *The Man Who Killed Don Quixote* means it should finally get off the ground). But Kylo Ren's not just any old blockbuster villain. He's one of the most complex bad 'uns the galaxy has ever seen (and that's quite a feat, given who his grandad is).

That depth is something that should continue to be explored in *Episode VIII*, under the guidance of *Looper* director Rian Johnson. "I hope so," Driver grins. "Rian is a genius. Well, he's a brilliant director. He wrote this next one... hopefully that [complex characterisation] continues, I would say." Driver has compared the upcoming instalment to *The Empire Strikes Back*; if he's this trilogy's Darth Vader proxy, does that mean a big revelation is coming? We'll have to wait until next year to find out. For now, Driver won't even say whether or not he felt guilty offing Han Solo, one of cinema's all-time great heroes, with a lightsaber through the chest. "Oh wow," he guffaws. "I can't say..."

PATERSON OPENS ON 25 NOVEMBER. STAR WARS: EPISODE VIII OPENS ON 15 DECEMBER 2017. GIRLS RETURNS NEXT YEAR.



MAKING OF

Matt Damon doesn't actually appear in his best film this year. Total Film meets the team behind festival favourite and awards front-runner *Manchester By The Sea* to find out how the Bourne star influenced this powerhouse drama. **WORDS** MATT MAYTUM

I think people will have a really personal experience with this movie because it gets you in touch with your own stuff," explains Matt Damon from the Toronto International Film Festival premiere of *Manchester By The Sea*. It's September 2016, and the latest leg on the festival tour for a film that's long been considered an awards-season front-runner, and TIFF has a reputation as an Oscar kingmaker, so expectations are sky-high. Damon's in town with writer/director Kenneth Lonergan and the cast, who we catch up with in the Fairmont Royal York hotel to discuss the complex but unshowy drama that's been flooring preview audiences the world over ahead of its 2017 release.

Damon was once earmarked to direct as well as star in the lead role; he came up with the initial idea for the film with John Krasinski (the pair previously co-wrote 2012's *Promised Land* together) during downtime on the set of *The Adjustment Bureau* (co-starring Krasinski's wife Emily Blunt), and he hired Lonergan to write the screenplay. "I read the first draft and I was bawling my eyes out," Damon explains. "I called him immediately and said, 'Kenny, nobody else can direct this.'"

Lonergan is perhaps best known as a playwright on the New York stage scene. On film, he has a small but avid following cultivated with superior dramas *You Can Count On Me* and *Margaret*. The former was released in 2000 (bagging Lonergan an Oscar nom for writing), and the latter was filmed in 2005 but not released until 2011, following disagreements and lawsuits relating to the final cut. So, *Manchester By The Sea* is only his third movie in 16 years, a strike rate that would rival Terrence Malick at his most lethargic. Not that his *Margaret* experience had put him off moviemaking.

"The problems with *Margaret* were almost all procedural, not really creative," Lonergan explains. "And I wasn't in danger of repeating the experience – one, because I would never go through that again despite how happy I am with the final result, and two, because I was just in a more comfortable environment with Matt Damon being the lead producer, and then with all the producers who came on board, who were so committed to making sure I made the movie I wanted to make."

Lonergan's films have earned a zealous following thanks to their pared-back naturalism, and how attuned they are to the rhythms of



GRIEF

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA



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ENCOUNTER

MAKING OF

everyday life. Damon calls him, “One of the great writer/directors on the planet,” having first met him 15 years ago, when he appeared in one of his plays in London alongside Casey Affleck. When scheduling conflicts prevented Damon taking the *MBTS* lead, the role went to Affleck (younger brother of Damon’s best bud Ben). “I wouldn’t have let it go to anybody but Casey, that was really the condition,” says Damon. “I knew he would crush the part. It’s a beautiful role, but the right actor always gets the part.”

When we first chat to Affleck, he’s somewhat distant and withdrawn. Asked if he had spoken to Damon about the character, he responds icily, “No. I never had the opportunity.” Dressed in a striped blue sweater and sporting a straggly beard and untamed hair loosely bundled into a ponytail, he’s not initially the most welcoming presence, but later warms up to be frank, funny and self-deprecating. If there’s an intensity when it comes to discussing *MBTS*, it’s perhaps not all that surprising given the withdrawn severity of his role.

Affleck stars as Lee Chandler, a janitor scraping by an existence day-to-day; avoiding any interaction for the most part, he’s prone to bouts of rage. This insular outcast is drawn back to his New England hometown of the title after the death of his brother Joe (Kyle Chandler), who names Lee the guardian of his teenage son, Patrick (Lucas Hedges). Returning means facing

up to the tragedies in his past, which are revealed gradually in flashbacks. Make no bones about it, the subject matter is heavygoing, and will slowly steamroll your emotions. Like Loneragan’s previous films, it’s a study of people reacting to the pressure of grief.

As the taciturn figure at the forefront, Affleck had to dig deep for pretty much the entire shoot. “Every day, there were a lot of emotional, hard scenes, sort of quote-unquote ‘dramatic scenes’,” recalls Affleck, burrowing his fingers into his beard. “You have to let yourself get pretty depressed and be able to quickly access some sadness and all those kind of feelings.” Going method with such a deep well of self-loathing meant Affleck wasn’t necessarily the most pleasant person to be around on set. “He’s a curmudgeon,” grins Kyle Chandler, who admits to taking the work much less seriously.

“If you work with people you totally trust, then you can let yourself be in a terrible mood and show up in a terrible mood and be very unpleasant,” explains Affleck. “I told Kenny at the beginning, ‘I really love you, you’ve been a friend for a long time. Don’t take anything I say or do personally for the next two months, because you’re the person who asked me to do this, and I’m going to have to be in a pretty terrible mood most of the time.’”

For the most part those emotions are kept below the surface, in keeping with Loneragan’s desire to have the drama unfold in an authentic, lifelike way. The writer director is also extremely



POWER COUPLE
Both Casey Affleck (as Lee) and Michelle Williams (his ex-wife Randi) are expected to be in the mix come awards season.

exacting with his dialogue; there’s no leeway for the actors to reassert his words. “None,” asserts Michelle Williams, who plays Lee’s estranged ex-wife Randi. “No freedom. Because he’s a playwright. The words are sacred because there’s nothing as important in a play as what you say next. And so with Kenny, he’s very specific. I think that his movies have a feeling that the dialogue is really natural and improvised and off-the-cuff, but it’s very strict.”

Chandler elaborates. “You’re really living in his head – his head is the set,” he explains, marvelling at the intricate construction of a script that comes across “pretty seamless” on screen. It certainly isn’t all doom and gloom in *MBTS*, though. In opposition to Affleck’s Lee is his young nephew, Patrick, a high-school ice-hockey star whose biggest problem is juggling the two girlfriends he has on the go.

“Without humour, I think the film would die,” says Loneragan. “Otherwise, it’s just a story of a dead man. I think [Patrick’s energy and liveliness] is what pulls Lee out of the trench he’s in.” In a film teeming with standout performances (Affleck and Williams are sure to be acknowledged by members of various academies), Lucas Hedges delivers a breakout turn as Patrick. He admits that the on-screen relationship with his avuncular counterpart was reflected on set. “[Casey and I]





MANCHESTER BY THE SEA



developed a relationship when I let go of wanting to be liked by him – which maybe I still haven't let go of," he smiles. "But when I at least let go of it enough, we were able to develop a relationship, one that does kind of resemble an uncle/nephew thing."

As in life, there's no single tone; *Manchester By The Sea* encompasses all shades of the human experience. It's Lonergan's insightfulness into human behaviour, says Affleck, that elevates him as a writer/director. "With movies, it's not about the spectacle of

subject of grief and death [*that's compelling*]," he says. "I think this film is about the way people are so wonderful about each other under circumstances of great distress." Lonergan points to the two ways that death is frequently handled in American culture: that on the whole it's either compartmentalised and swept under the rug, or it's crassly sensationalised. "I hope that a film like this will at least give somebody something to say, 'I understand and I can relate. That's happened to me, and I'm not alone.'"

DREAM TEAM
(top) Lucas Hedges is one to watch as Patrick; (above) producer Matt Damon shares a joke with Lonergan and Affleck.

Affleck, meanwhile, has a harder time adjusting to the awards chatter. "I've been in so many bad movies, I've developed a thick skin," he laughs. "That means the praise is harder to get through. But keep telling me and it'll get through. I'm open to it."

'THIS MOVIE WILL STAY WITH PEOPLE, THE CHARACTERS ARE SO RICHLY DRAWN'
MATT DAMON

it. People still respond to movies that just seem to touch a nerve of real human behaviour. He just understands human behaviour. His father was a psychiatrist. His grandfather was a psychiatrist. He probably would've made a great psychiatrist. Instead, he's a writer, but he's doing it with the insight of a psychiatrist. It's helpful to hear a director talk that way about their characters."

While all of the writer director's films thus far have dealt with the topic of grief, it's not something that Lonergan considers a personal fascination. "I don't think it's the actual

If the early response to the film by festival critics is anything to go by, audiences are having an intense reaction to it, a reaction that could carry it all the way to awards glory. Kyle Chandler is familiar with award-friendly material, having played parts in *The Wolf Of Wall Street* and *Carol* in recent years. "It means a lot to me to be respected enough to have these great filmmakers ask me to be part of these films," he admits.



Lonergan is a self-confessed bundle of anxieties, and admits to being easily overwhelmed. But when it comes to people celebrating *MBTS* – particularly following the *Margaret* debacle – Lonergan is very much at ease. "It's gratifying – my mind is well able to take in the good things," he chuckles. "It's a wonderful feeling. I'm very comfortable with that feeling. I love it." As to Matt Damon's reaction to the finished film... Has he seen it yet? "Oh sure," confirms Lonergan. "He's seen it a few times. He liked it." To hear Damon's reaction from the horse's mouth is slightly less understated. "This is a movie that will stay with people," says the *Bourne* star, described by Lonergan as the "patron saint" of the project. "His characters are so deeply and richly drawn, with such great detail, that you believe in them. A lot of movie characters are like pencil sketches. But Kenny's really resonate because they feel like real life."

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA OPENS ON 13 JANUARY.



From starring in *Mad Max* and *Lethal Weapon* to directing *Braveheart* and *The Passion Of The Christ*, **MEL GIBSON**'s career is etched in Hollywood folklore. But after 10 years in the wilderness following a series of public scandals, can he find redemption with his new film, **HACKSAW RIDGE**?

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM



SPOTLIGHT

M

el Gibson's *Hacksaw Ridge* has just received its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival. It's 10am and *Total Film* is sitting with Vince Vaughn and Luke Bracey, two of its stars, in the Danieli Hotel when in walks Gibson. His eyes shaded with sunglasses, he's distracted by the opulent surroundings. "This is my old room," he says. "Twenty years ago. It's changed a little. I remember the cherubs on the ceiling," he winks, "used to be a mirror!"

Gibson is understandably buzzing. "I did not sleep a fucking wink... I haven't slept since I hit this country," he purrs. Last night's unveiling of his fifth film as director – his first in 10 years since he made his Mayan thriller *Apocalypto* – was nothing short of triumphant. The first reviews for the real-life story of World War 2 conscientious objector Desmond T. Doss (Andrew Garfield) were glowing. "Gibson's forceful comeback," claimed *The Hollywood Reporter*, echoing many.

That's putting it mildly after a decade that's seen this double Oscar-winner's Hollywood stock plummet

after a series of ugly outbursts went public. Pulled-over in July 2006 for drink-driving, his tirade of anti-Semitic abuse launched against the arresting officer threatened to end his career. "It was just the stupid rambling of a drunkard," he later told ABC's Diane Sawyer, the first of many public apologies that Gibson has issued across the past decade.

While Gibson hit rehab, it didn't stop there – with the very worst elements of his personality writ large. In 2010, leaked tapes of a phone-call surfaced, as Gibson's expletive-riddled argument with Oksana Grigorieva, his former girlfriend and mother to his daughter Lucia, further sullied his image. Allegations of domestic violence were made – overshadowing Gibson's appearance in Jodie Foster's domestic drama *The Beaver* as a depressive undergoing a spiritual crisis.

The fallout was brutal, not least when it emerged that Gibson lost a cameo role in *The Hangover 2* after crew members refused to work with him. Unsurprisingly, the past few years have been quiet for the actor-director. Leading roles in low-profile indies such as *How I Spent My Summer Vacation* and this month's *Blood Father* have jostled alongside villainous cameos in *Machete Kills* and *The Expendables 3*. But it's *Hacksaw Ridge* that really announces Gibson's full-on return.

When *Total Film* meets Gibson later, he's settled in to a similarly plush suite idly flipping through a glossy magazine.



Dressed in a navy shirt and jeans – sunglasses now removed – the 60-year-old is a nervy presence as he twitches and tugs at his silvery beard. "That's very Mel," explains Hugo Weaving, who plays Doss' father in *Hacksaw Ridge*. "He's a very restless, infectious individual... his mind is ever-searching."

Gibson has certainly spent much of his career sifting through some familiar themes again and again. Hollywood might have been introduced to him as George Miller's Road Warrior in *Mad Max* and cast him as the unhinged cop Martin Riggs in *Lethal Weapon*, but Gibson has personally been drawn to "extraordinary" characters, such as his disfigured teacher in his 1993 directorial debut *The Man Without A Face* and Scottish rebel William Wallace in *Braveheart*, the film that won Gibson two Oscars for Best Picture and Best Director.

"This is what great stories are about – the one who's different, who goes outside the normal realm of our experiences and behaves in a certain way," he says. "We gravitate towards those stories, those hero stories. Joseph Campbell talks about that – the hero





'The most difficult thing in life is overcoming your fallen nature, I struggle with that all the time. We're all full of flaws'

with a thousand faces. These stories have been told since cave paintings, using your own fecal matter on the wall. And Desmond Doss was certainly like that. He was extraordinary."

A committed Seventh-day Adventist, the Virginia-born Doss was a pacifist who served as a US Army medic in the 77th Infantry Division. His refusal to carry arms led to bullying from his peers, a court martial from his superiors and, eventually, acceptance and acclaim amid the brutal battle on the Japanese island of Okinawa. Without ever firing a weapon, he single-handedly saved 75 lives, rescuing injured men from the battleground – the 100-foot high hilltop nicknamed 'Hacksaw Ridge' – and lowering them to safety.

One man army

Doss, who became the first conscientious objector ever to be awarded the Congressional Medal of

Honour, was "inspired", says Gibson, by his faith. "He's operating on something greater than himself... tapping into something supernatural, to do something superhuman. Nobody could understand how he did it. How do you get 75 guys off a hill in 10 hours? You're dragging a guy every 10 minutes and lowering him down. How do you even start with that? But he did it. He was only 150lb."

It didn't take long for critics to draw comparisons between the staunchly Catholic Gibson and Doss. The story of an outcast who finds redemption through suffering, Gibson has already explored this arc in 2004's *The Passion Of The Christ*, his blood-soaked re-telling of Jesus' crucifixion which stunned the industry when it made \$612m at the box office outside the studio system; likewise *Apocalypto*, with its tale of a Meso-American tribesman desperate to save his family at all costs.

FRONT LINE

(above) Desmond Doss (Andrew Garfield) refuses to bear arms; (below) Gibson in war drama *Gallipoli*.

"I think the most difficult thing in life – I struggle with this all the time – is to overcome your own fallen nature, and work at that," he says. "We're a bunch of people, full of flaws. So [we have] to try and overcome those negative things in ourselves, which were just born in us. And a good way to do that is to choose love. This is what impressed me about Desmond; greater love hath no man than to give his life for another. And this guy, that's what he was about."

The film is also a stark reminder of 1981's *Gallipoli*, Peter Weir's elegiac World War 1 tale that climaxes on the battlefields of the Ottoman Peninsula.





"I haven't made that [connection]," admits Gibson, who played Australian soldier Frank Dunne for Weir. "Subconsciously, I'm sure it played into it somehow, but I hadn't really related it to that. Jesus, I was 23, 24 years old when we made that. I really, really dug that experience. It was like a real film, with a really great filmmaker."

At the time, Gibson was just five years into a career that had begun with a recurring role in television serial *The Sullivans*. Born in Peekskill, New York, the sixth of 11 children, Gibson's family relocated to Sydney, Australia when he was 12. His paternal grandmother, opera singer Eva Mylott, hailed from Down Under – and, like her, Gibson gravitated towards the arts. Enrolling at the National Institute of Dramatic Art, he was educated in classical theatre, performing Shakespeare (making his 1990 turn in Franco Zeffirelli's *Hamlet* no surprise).

It was, of course, his turn as Max Rockatansky, the highway patrol cop out for revenge in George Miller's 1979 dystopian classic *Max Max* that changed everything. Paid just \$15,000 for the role, it led to two sequels – 1981's brilliant *Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior* and the rather bloated Hollywood-spun effort *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome* four years later. A fourth outing for Gibson was always on the cards, but the now-legendary delays for what became Miller's *Mad Max: Fury Road* meant Tom Hardy took over as Max.

Gibson admits he was blown away by *Fury Road*. "It was amazing," he says. "I love George and I think as a

filmmaker, he is able to visually make something that smashes you across the face. It was just visually stunning. And the editing... amazing. It was something else. I dug it. I sat next to him when they screened it in Los Angeles. I laughed in all the right places. He said, 'What's funny?' I said, 'That is – because I know you're a sick fuck!' And he appreciated that."

You suspect Gibson learnt a thing or two from Miller when it came to orchestrating the carnage of *Hacksaw Ridge*. Intense, bloody, brutal, as bullets fly, mortars explode and limbs are severed, it's up there with the Omaha Beach opening in Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* as one of the most visceral depictions of war-time conflict ever committed to screen. Perhaps what's most impressive, in the era of Michael Bay-like on-screen chaos, is just how lucid the action is.

"It's like a symphony," Gibson explains. "You have to have stages and you have to have different characters for each part of it. You have different movements through it. So you visualise it and choreograph it so it doesn't get stale or old. There's different natures to every aspect of it... it's not exactly written down what happens, so you have to imagine, what shape does the battle have? Who are the protagonists and participants?"

If he knows how to stage an action sequence, it's his strength as a storyteller and his ability to "set up character" that really impresses, says Vaughn, who delivers a memorable turn as Sergeant Howell, Doss' superior. The



ACTION SHOT
(above) Gibson gets hands on making *Apocalypse*; (below) on location making *Hacksaw Ridge*.

actor recalls accompanying Gibson to the disabled veterans' conference in Atlanta, where they screened the film: "It was thankfully cathartic for them, but they said the visuals and the impact brought them back so strongly. These are servicemen who've lost limbs."

Dream team

The production returned Gibson to Australia, where he spent a year prepping and shooting. "It was very familiar," he says. "It was like putting on a comfortable pair of shoes. Just fell right in and reacquainted myself with friends I knew from high school; boys, girls, people I used to know. Now we're all wrinkled! It was such a nice thing – to go back and catch up." He pauses. "And apologise to everyone!" What for? "I just like to apologise to everybody!"

Though he's chuckling as he says it, Gibson's language is steeped in words of atonement. Regret seems to be something that drives him – even when it comes to the roles he missed out on. "Jeez...I wanna work with [Martin] Scorsese," he reveals. "In fact, I almost did and I was doing something else and I couldn't do it. I regretted that. I thought that would've been fun. He wanted me to be [the] Jack Nicholson [role] in *The Departed*. I was directing *Apocalypse* at the time and it was, 'Aaargh!' It drove me crazy."

It wasn't the only time Gibson came close to working with Marty. Around the time the first *Lethal Weapon* turned him into a bona fide action star, he recalls a trip to London.

"I'd eaten a bad oyster and I was in the Savoy Hotel for two weeks, dying," he recalls. "Salmonella or something. Scorsese was in the room down the hallway and he got me in there and he was watching five TVs at the same time. He wanted me to be his Jesus in *The Last Temptation* [Of Christ]. For one reason or another, that didn't happen."



Lethal weaponry

Hacksaw Ridge is the latest Mel Gibson movie to feature strikingly visceral violence. Here are his previous gory highlights...



Braveheart 1995

Gibson's second movie as director saw him playing fast and loose with Scottish history to craft a rousing epic that swept the Oscars. Blood gushes from sword, arrow and hammer attacks throughout the many battle sequences, and the hero endures a protracted, torturous end, but the ultra-realistic horse slaughter drew the most gasps. Credit to Gibson's technical prowess and mechanical gee-gees; no animals were harmed in the making.



The Passion Of The Christ 2004

Depictions of Jesus on film are frequently staid and solemn, but Mel Gibson's movie interpretation of Christ's final days is relentlessly brutal. The skin-flaying lashings are probably the most wince-inducing, though the crucifixion itself is also a bit of a slog, and far from the sanitised images you saw in Sunday School. Audiences weren't perturbed; the film became the highest-grossing R-rated film ever at the US box office.



Apocalypto 2006

Perhaps Gibson's most underrated movie, *Apocalypto* follows Jaguar Paw (Rudy Youngblood) and his tribulations to save his family in the Meso-American rainforest. The gut-churning highlight is at the top of a sacrificial pyramid, as severed heads are tossed down the steps, and it never lets up from there. **MM**

SOLDIER, SOLDIER

Doss bonds with nurse Dorothy Schutte (Teresa Palmer).

It's not hard to see why Gibson so desperately wanted to play Jesus (a role that eventually went to Willem Dafoe). He's currently planning a follow-up to *The Passion Of The Christ*, with Randall Wallace, the screenwriter of *Braveheart* who went on to direct Gibson in the 2002 Vietnam War-set movie *We Were Soldiers*.

"It's not a sequel... well, I guess it is," reveals Gibson. "The resurrection; boy – a lot of stuff happens. But Randall and I are just toying... that's a couple of years away."

In the meantime, Gibson has to wait to see if *Hacksaw Ridge* – when it opens next month in the US – will follow the way of Clint Eastwood's mega-hit

in so many ways," Downey Jr. recently told *Deadline*, even hinting he might relent on his refusal to do *Iron Man 4* if Gibson directed. "That movie would be bananas."

Gibson merely shrugs at the idea. "It might be fun," he says. "You'd have to figure out a way to be different with that." Right now, he has other concerns. His girlfriend, writer Rosalind Ross, is pregnant, meaning Gibson will become a father for the ninth time (he has seven children by his first wife Robyn, whom he stayed married to for 26 years before they separated in 2006). Motherhood, he says, is the toughest assignment of all. "When I look at what the mother does... I'm just the helper."

'Scorsese wanted me to play the Jack Nicholson role in The Departed, but I was directing Apocalypto. It drove me crazy'

American Sniper. There is nothing like a huge box-office smash to soothe the savage Hollywood breast. And then there are those rumours that Gibson might become embroiled in the Marvel Universe, thanks to his old pal – and one-time co-star in 1990's *Air America* – Robert Downey Jr.

An actor who knows a thing or two about being a pariah, after his own troubles with substance abuse, Downey's road to recovery began after he was cast in the 2003 remake of *The Singing Detective*, which co-starred Gibson, whose company Icon produced it. "He and I are so similar

Most recently, he explored the ties that bind in *Blood Father*, playing an ex-con tattoo artist protecting his daughter ("I'm a parent. It ticked a lot of boxes"), proof he can still deliver old-school action. He's next due to make *The Professor And The Madman*, a story about the creation of the Oxford English Dictionary, co-starring Sean Penn. "I've always wanted to work with that guy," he grins. But no more big roles, he says. "When you're 60, you don't do that. You'd end up in hospital."

HACKSAW RIDGE OPENS IN EARLY 2017.
BLOOD FATHER IS ON GENERAL RELEASE.



20 TER G

So-bad-they're-good. Hate-watches. Guilty pleasures. Call them anything you want, these celluloid disasters may not be cool but they warm the cockles of Total Film's mean-spirited little heart. So join us as we salute the best of the worst.

WORDS SAM ASHURST, JANE CROWTHER, MATT GLASBY, JAMIE GRAHAM, KEVIN HARLEY, SIMON KINNEAR, MATTHEW LEYLAND, MATT MAYTUM, NEIL SMITH, JOSH WINNING

A

According to academics, watching utter trash doesn't mean we're low-brow philistines with a high tolerance for garbage. In a recent study, eggheads at the Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics in Frankfurt reckon 'horrible movie' connoisseurs are actually clever clogs and 'cultural omnivores'. Which means it's OK to watch culturally bereft rubbish that's inexplicably entertaining. You're a genius for doing it, so go ahead! Plus, tapping into the puerile, febrile offerings of dodgy flicks helps you appreciate trashy homages such as *The Greasy Strangler* – and acts as a palate cleanser for quality films. With that in mind, join us in the cine-gutter as we celebrate these 20 absolute atrocities... ➔

TERRIBLY GOOD MOVIES

RIBBLY OOD MOVIES



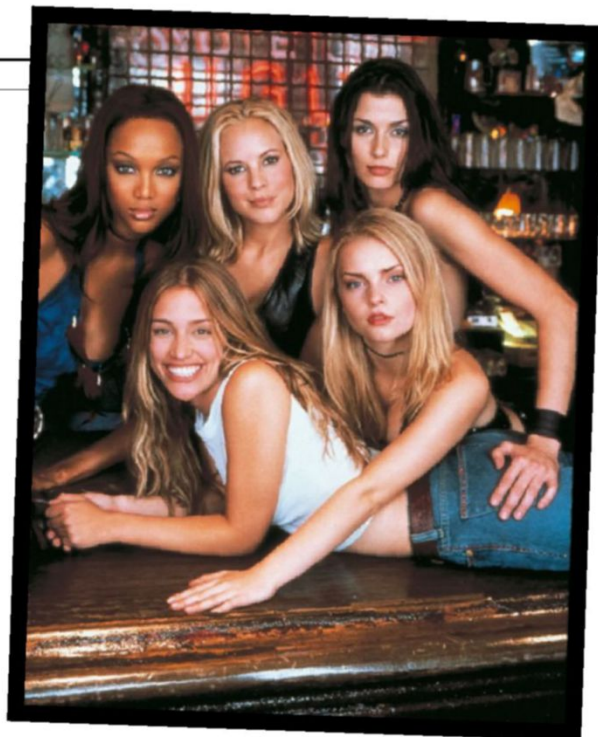


COYOTE UGLY 2000

WHY IT'S BAD? Essentially little more than an ad for the real-life New York bar, it's a post-feminist ode to the dubious virtues of dancing semi-naked for drunks.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Jerry Bruckheimer does chick-flick! As slickly constructed (uncredited, by Kevin Smith) as Jerry's action movies, here's a high-concept fantasy for men *and* women. Focusing on a female protagonist (girl power!) who's too shy to perform her self-penned ditties in front of an audience, *Coyote Ugly* extols the virtues of wearing leather trousers and grinding on top of a bar for self-confidence. Um, OK.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Flashdance*, *Glitter*, *Honey*



MAC AND ME 1988

WHY IT'S BAD? Liked *E.T.* but wished it was 100 per cent less good? Bingo. Mac the alien is perhaps celluloid's least convincing puppet, and the product placement is eye-watering – check out the extended (but inexplicable) McDonald's breakdancing scene.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Watching *Mac* is like passing through the Golden Arches to a glorious alterna-world where good is bad, down is up, and fast food provides a joie-de-vivre only promised by adverts or hard drugs. Mmm Maccas...

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Howard The Duck*, *Nukie*, *Super Mario Bros.*

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE 1987

WHY IT'S BAD? Attempting to plug the gap left by *Star Wars*, director Gary Goddard simply thieves wholesale: Skeletor commands an army of Stormtroopers, there are epic laser-gun battles, the score is shoestring John Williams...

WHY IT'S GOOD? Dolph Lundgren is a meatsack with a mouth, but the baddies are massively memorable – Frank Langella spouts Shakespeare and chews scenery as Skeletor, while Meg Foster steals scenes as the snarky henchwoman Evil-Lyn. Ace.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Clash Of The Titans* (2010), *Krull*, *John Carter*



TERRIBLY GOOD MOVIES



BASKET CASE 1982

WHY'S IT BAD? A grotty exploitation movie with terrible effects, showcasing a guy who carries his separated Siamese twin around in a basket.

WHY'S IT GOOD? It doesn't take itself seriously and is made with palpable affection for 10p. Perfectly captures the seediness of '80s New York.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Street Trash*, *Critters*, *Frankenhooker*



THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU 1996

WHY IT'S BAD? On-set bust-ups, domineering directors, MIA actors...

WHY IT'S GOOD? It's so weird. Marlon Brando resembles a sunbathing Geisha, replete with the world's smallest man, Nelson de la Rosa, as a mini-me.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Planet Of The Apes* (2001), *Monkeybone*, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*



GREASE 2 1982

WHY'S ITS BAD? No Travolta, no Newton-John, no memorable tunes, and a \$15m take at the box office. *Grease* took \$395m...

WHY'S IT GOOD? It's a camp classic full of tidily choreographed dance numbers, and it boasts a young Michelle Pfeiffer sneering around bubblegum.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Xanadu*, *Glitter*, *Mamma Mia!*

COCKTAIL 1988

WHY'S IT BAD? The tagline's a horror ('When he pours, he reigns') and the story (NY bartender finds work and love in Jamaica) is an excuse for cast and crew to go on holiday.

WHY'S IT GOOD? Tom Cruise is luminously naff as he juggles spirits bottles and ladies. Plot is *Top Gun* with mixers instead of Miramar – cocky genius falls in love, loses all, mooches, learns humility, wins it all back.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *The Color Of Money*, *Days Of Thunder*, *The Firm*



LEGENDS OF THE FALL 1994

WHY IT'S BAD? It's a very earnest, very long attempt to imitate David Lean. By filmmakers who appear never to have seen a David Lean film.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Anthony Hopkins' post-heart attack hamming is off the chart. It ends with Brad Pitt battling a bear in dramatic FREEZE FRAME.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *First Knight*, *Seven Years In Tibet*, *The Wolfman*



SAN ANDREAS 2015

WHY IT'S BAD? Disaster movies don't come more ludicrous, as Dwayne Johnson faces the largest earthquake ever. It was reportedly based on real science but it's an OTT CGI deluge, with characters so predictable you could chart their arcs with pin-point precision on first viewing.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Johnson's enthusiasm can sell any old nonsense, and the predictability adds a comforting familiarity. Like an apocalyptic *Planes, Trains And Automobiles*, the Rock pilots every vehicle under the sun to evade quakes and tsunamis and reunite his estranged family.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Armageddon*, *The Core*, *Journey 2: The Mysterious Island*



TROLL II 1990

WHY IT'S BAD? The writers/director didn't speak fluent English during *Troll II*'s creation, and it really shows in the truly bizarre script.

WHY IT'S GOOD? It doesn't feature a single troll and has no connection to the original *Troll*, but contains so much heart it inspired a documentary – *Best Worst Movie*.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Miami Connection*, *Night Train To Terror*, *Deadly Prey*



HOWARD THE DUCK

1986

WHY IT'S BAD? Flapping between snarky humour, ropery SFX and inter-species sex, George Lucas' turkey lacked magnetism, animal or otherwise.

WHY IT'S GOOD? A hammy Jeffrey Jones, a repellent Dark Overlord and a pun-packed realisation of Duckworld.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*, *Willow*, *The Million Dollar Duck*

SHOWGIRLS 1995

WHY'S IT BAD? Paul Verhoeven's ill-fated attempt to out-basic *Instinct* runs aground on a reef of exploitative titillation, awful dialogue ("Must be weird, not having anyone come on you!") and a charisma-free turn from lead Elizabeth Berkley.

WHY'S IT GOOD? Berkley's Flipper impression during her sex-in-a-pool scene with Kyle MacLachlan is a comic tour de force, while her bonding with Gina Gershon over a shared love of Doggy Chow is Joe Eszterhas at his finest.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Dancing At The Blue Iguana*, *Striptease*, *Valley Of The Dolls*



THE TOXIC AVENGER 1984

WHY IT'S BAD? Writer/director Lloyd Kaufman throws every B-movie cliché at the screen, and it sticks.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Troma's trashy masterpiece made an icon of adorable mop-twirling mutant vigilante Toxie.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Tromeo & Juliet*, *Citizen Toxie*, *All The Love You Cannes!*



SHARKNADO 2013

WHY IT'S BAD? It has a punchline for a title, a cast of B-listers and spawned a franchise of fish/weather mash-ups.

WHY IT'S GOOD? It *knows* it's bollocks, so the effects are deliberately cruddy, the plot gleefully foamy.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Snakes On A Plane*, *Piranha 3D*, *Mega Shark Vs Crocosaurus*



THE ROOM 2003

WHY IT'S BAD? A work of staggering narcissism by writer/director/star Tommy Wiseau. Think *Peyton Place* meets *My Dad Wrote A Porno*.

WHY IT'S GOOD? It's drinking game-tastic. Sup every time someone enters/leaves with undue haste, forgets to shut the front door or has bad sex.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Ben And Arthur*, *The Brown Bunny*, *Gigli*



THE WICKER MAN 2006

WHY IT'S BAD? According to Nic Cage, Neil LaBute deliberately turned the chilling original into a subversive comedy – if only he'd told critics.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Cage's performance is principally based on shouting, he punches someone while dressed as a bear and 'Not the bees!' has become common parlance for utter crap (and its own meme).

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Halloween* (2007), *House Of Wax* (2005), *Black Xmas*



GLEN OR GLENDA 1953

WHY IT'S BAD? Introduced by Bela Lugosi's stream of baffle gab, Ed Wood's transvestite melodrama bursts with bad acting and, uh, buffalo footage.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Wood's accidental surrealism and achingly sincere gender subversions earned David Lynch's praise. If it's good enough for him...

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Plan 9 From Outer Space*, *Mommie Dearest*, *White Chicks*



2012 2009

WHY IT'S BAD? The Mayan prophecy-based apocalypse is an afterthought besides the survival of hack novelist John Cusack, who outpaces LA's crumbling scenery. The rest of the globe is barely noticed under mega-tsunamis of molten-cheese dialogue.

WHY IT'S GOOD? Bigger and harder to swallow than most destructo-pornos, 2012 revels in escalation's call. Summoning quakes, volcanoes and solar flares, Roland Emmerich mounts a gleeful argument for 'everything in immoderation'.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *The Core*, *Volcano*, *The Happening*

DUDE, WHERE'S MY CAR? 2000

WHY IT'S BAD? Stoners Ashton Kutcher and Seann William Scott retrace their night out. Visually basic, structurally ramshackle, tonally uneven and perpetually immature, with repetitive jokes that far outstay their welcome. (And then...?)

WHY IT'S GOOD? Dude! Its power is in the casting of Kutcher with Scott. Only they could make the 'what does mine say?' scene funny/cute.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Car 54, Where Are You?*, *Freddy Got Fingered*, *The Dukes Of Hazzard*



ANACONDA 1997

WHY'S IT BAD? Crappy CGI, dopey dialogue and a cast of clueless expendables guaranteed this *Jaws* wannabe was at the bottom of the barrel of '90s creature features.

WHY'S IT GOOD? Jon Voight's Brando impression and his demise (half-digested and barfed up out of the big wriggler, he winks before buying it) are deliciously dreadful, while Eric Stoltz literally sleeps through the whole thing and Ice Cube goes feral on the snake's ass.

SEE THIS IF YOU HATED: *Arachnophobia*, *Lake Placid*, *Tremors*

Got more horrible movies to add?

Tweet us at @totalfilm #TerriblyGoodMovies



WORDS JANE CROWTHER PORTRAITS AUSTIN HARGRAVE



I'VE STRUGGLED WITH
BEING A LEADING MAN.
MY BEST SUCCESSES
ARE AS A CHARACTER
ACTOR. THAT'S WHAT
ACTING IS ALL ABOUT



AARON ECKHART

He's played the lead in romcoms and actioners with varying success, but Aaron Eckhart is at his intriguing best when inverting his handsome looks with darkness, mundanity or turmoil. After 20 self-confessed 'up-and-down' years in the business, he's riding high with two performances that could take him all the way to the 'big show'.





W

hen *Total Film* arrives at the London Hotel on a blazing hot LA day in late August, we find the subject of our planned interview not protected behind closed doors by a phalanx of PRs, but standing, unaccompanied, in the corridor chatting animatedly with a passing fan in fluent French. Catching Aaron Eckhart's eye, it's clear *TF* has a surprised expression as the 48-year-old actor smiles and gives a little shrug as if to say "caught me". Though corn-fed good-looking (he repeatedly mentions his age, but he has the trim physique and chiselled face of a younger man), Eckhart is California born (in Cupertino) but not bred.

The son of Mormons – a computer exec dad and children's author mum – Eckhart and his siblings travelled the world during their formative years, living in the UK, Hawaii, Australia and France. Hence that bi-lingual *je ne sais quoi*. "It takes them by

surprise," Eckhart admits of being able to crack out the Français when we sit down later. "I lived in France when I was 19 to 21. About three years ago, I just said, 'OK man, I'm not going to let this go.' So every single day I get up in the morning, make myself a cup of coffee, and I read all of the French newspapers for two hours. I study grammar. I study French voraciously."

Taking audiences by surprise, playing against his persona and throwing himself into projects rapaciously is something of an acting MO. After breaking out as pretty-but-poisonous Chad in fellow Brigham Young University alumni Neil LaBute's *In The Company Of Men*, he became a household name under a mane of hair as George in *Erin Brockovich*, embraced the inner monster in *The Dark Knight* and was a POTUS who could kick ass in *Olympus Has Fallen*. He continues that search for what lies beneath with his latest performances; as real-life co-pilot Jeff Skiles in *Sully*, Clint Eastwood's story of the miracle on the Hudson; and as overweight, balding alcoholic Kevin Rooney in boxing biopic *Bleed For This*. Both require a lack of vanity for Eckhart (playing figurative and literal wingman to Tom Hanks' Sully and getting 'ugly' for Rooney) but now, disarmingly frank and exuding zen, he's happy where he's ended up.

"I really didn't want to get slated into the conveyor belt of good-looking guys trying to be in romantic comedies," he says, blue eyes serious. "That was

a conscious decision that I made early on. Looking back on it after 20 years, maybe I made the wrong decision. I certainly don't have the notoriety or success that that would have granted me.

"I've had an up-and-down career. I've been up, down, I've gotten lost. This fall, it just so happens I'm back into people's consciousness. But if I were to say, 'What do I want to go and do right now? Do I want to go play a leading man? Or would I rather be a more interesting character part?' I would say that I would stick with the character stuff because that's where I get the most juice."

What was it like working with Clint as a director on *Sully*? He appears to be pretty hands-off...

Clint is so different. He's not just a director. He's 65 years into a big career – not only as an actor with aplomb, but making iconic films. Both Clint and Tom [Hanks] have made films that people will remember in the pantheon of time. That's not easy to do. So you're going into the film and growing up with the guy. He's still in great shape. He's funny. He means that much to me as an actor. As a film guy, I'm totally starstruck by him.

And the same thing with Tom. Tom's a huge person in my life in terms of as an actor. Tom made *Forrest Gump*! That's insane. So I took advantage of that, in the sense that I watched them, I learned from them. I was a spy. I'm picking up on everything: their energy, their movement, their choices, how they react to this, how they react to that. I was a student. I'm not one to gush, I feel like I'm being real... I had a great experience making the movie.

Watching *Sully* you certainly have the laconic pilot drawl down pat...

That was my most fun part! That's the highlight of my career! Just saying [adopts pilot voice], "This is 909 ready for take-off..." I love that shit. Tom and I heard the black box audio and Tom sounds exactly like him. And when we talked to Captain Sullenberger he said that's how they trained. When you're in [an emergency] situation like that, you just say it as flat as you can, as quick as you can.

Because you're taking the emotion out of the situation?

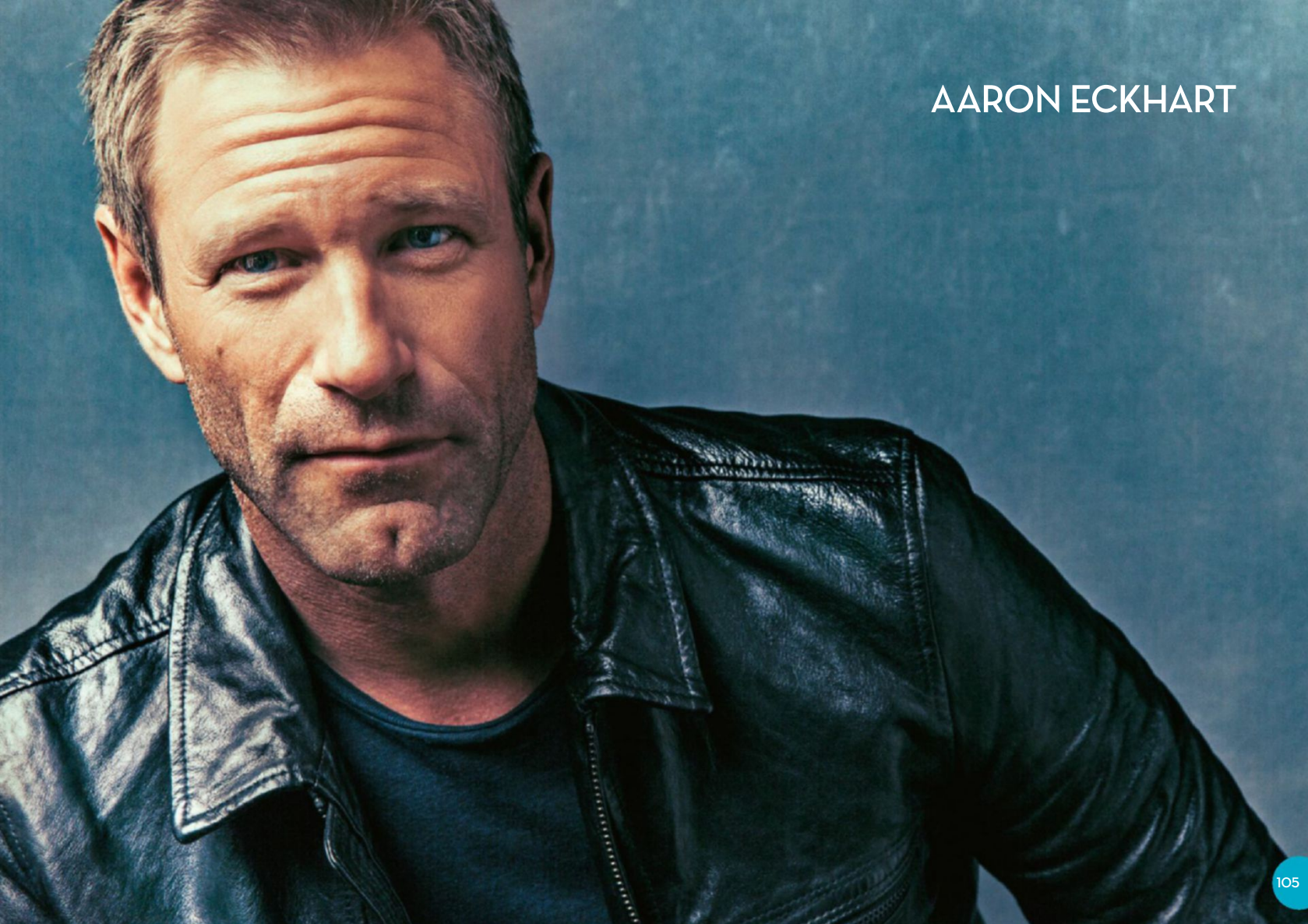
Yeah – while your heart beats internally.

Which is kind of weird for an actor. It's the opposite of what you're trying to do – making audiences feel it.

Yeah, I'm over putting emotion in acting. I'm done with it. [laughs, then grows serious]



HIGH FLYER
Eckhart plays Jeff Skiles alongside Tom Hanks in *Sully*.



It's how you make money in this business. I look at something and I go, "Doesn't that guy ever get scared?" You know, when you're watching an action movie. "Doesn't the death of his wife have any effect on him?" Because everybody's just like boom! [mimics an action stance]

Could you relate to Jeff Skiles' experience of suddenly being thrust into the media spotlight? You must have experienced that yourself when you decided to become an actor...

Yeah, but I think for these guys, there's a difference between being an actor and being a hero saving lives. While they're getting all the media scrutiny and all the praise and all that, they're going through PTSD. They're not sleeping at night. They could lose their job, their pension, their licence to fly. They could lose what they live for. But I have to think that if you're going to go on *Letterman* and *Katie Couric* and all that, you've got to start buying into it at some point. You've got to start digging it.

I HAVE A HARD TIME PLAYING THE LEADING MAN, I TRY TO PLAY AGAINST IT

Do you buy into that as an actor? The media circus?

Yeah, but that's learned behaviour. When you're in your twenties and all of a sudden you're doing all these things, your main MO is: "I don't deserve this. I'm not that good. I'm not that funny. I'm not that good of an actor." And so you have all these beautiful things in front of you and these opportunities and all that sort of stuff – and yet you can't get out of your own way. And that's why so many of us stumble.

So I don't know if anybody really is evolved enough to enjoy it. I enjoy this stuff now, because

I'm doing it on my own terms. I'm not trying to put on airs for you. I'm not trying to be somebody I'm not. I understand that it's part of my job and I've made the decision to have fun with it. I think the key is: do you have a good product to show or not? And that makes all the difference.

And is it tricky to find a good product?

Look at the box office today. Look at it last week. It's impossible to find. And when you

do, that's when you've really got to enjoy it – like going out on a tour of *The Dark Knight*, when you have something that's really good and special.

I think *Sully* and *Bleed For This* are two good products. So I'm like, "I'm going to fucking enjoy this." I'm old. I'm 48. I've beat myself up enough. I'm losing the "woe is me. Why not this? Why did this happen?" Fuck all that. I'm just going to go and have fun for these three months that I have to promote two good films – because it just doesn't happen.

Speaking of *The Dark Knight*, have you seen *Suicide Squad* and the new *Joker* to compare it to Heath Ledger's?

No. I didn't know there was a *Joker* in *Suicide Squad*. Actually, I saw Jared Leto's make-up. Is he the *Joker*? I thought it was unlike Heath's. Heath did the genius thing of making his make-up home-grown. That's out-of-the-box thinking, and it's so effective.

I haven't seen *Suicide Squad*. My experience is my experience for *Batman*. I don't compare it to anything or [my *Two-Face*] to Tommy Lee Jones'. It just doesn't matter to me. I was with Heath and everybody else. I had that experience with Chris [Nolan]. I never

→ thought I'd be in a *Batman*, but you know, Heath did something that nobody else did. You can try to imitate it...

Let's go back a bit further to your breakout role in *In The Company Of Men*. What was it like working back then compared to working on a major film set like *The Dark Knight* or *Sully*?

Having your mum make baloney sandwiches for the crew for lunch... you know, wearing a suit three sizes too big... Neil saying, "Aaron, we're going to lose the sun in three minutes, and we have 300ft of film. Do the monologue." That's good stuff, too! Neil is a genius in a lot of ways. We did theatre together [at *Brigham Young University*]. We bucked the system together. We still haven't been invited back to speak at our university, which is shameful. Imagine how the students could benefit from our experiences.

Your production of *In The Company Of Men* was shut down by the university before it opened because they were unhappy with the themes. Why did you decide to play Chad on film when you'd rehearsed to play Howard on stage?

I didn't. I was going to play Howard, and Neil had another actor that was going to play Chad. Maybe two weeks before I was supposed to go to Indiana to make the film Neil called me up and he said he couldn't make contact with this actor. He goes, "Why don't you play Chad?" I said, "I can't. Because you played Chad in what we did in the theatre, and I could never do it as good as you." I hung up the phone, and I was in my 400-square-foot apartment in New York City without a pot to piss in – pardon my language. And I looked around, and I picked up the phone. I called Neil up and I said, "I'll do it."

What adjustments did you make? Did you play it very differently from what Neil had done?

Neil's writing is a lot like Mamet's in the sense that it has a certain rhythm and cadence. It's pretty straightforward. It's the language itself that's exciting. It's not the way you play it. In fact, if you play it with the least amount of emotion, that's the way to do it – and that's the way he did it. Because the words and the circumstances are so dangerous and so edgy, that they do all the work for you. I put my spin on it. I put myself into it.

I think if any actor relishes the words and relishes the situations – like when the intern drops his pants or is telling her I've been goofing on her the entire time – as long as the audience believes that that's something I'm passionate about, that I love, then I think that's enough to sell it.

You worked with LaBute again a number of times after that, but not on *The Wicker Man*...

No, I was an extra in *The Wicker Man* [Eckhart cameos]. It was never a conversation to be in it. When we did *Nurse Betty*, I think we planned on me being in every single one of his films but the problem is that you get separate careers. But Neil and I are obviously still very, very good friends, and we plan on working together. In fact, we would like to do maybe a 20-year anniversary look at Chad, where he is now with his life. It's sort of like, why didn't Redford and Newman ever work again after *Butch Cassidy*? It's not that they didn't want to, I'm sure. Really, it has to do with taking other films and having incongruent schedules.

You've worked with some truly great directors...

I did *The Pledge* with Sean [Penn] – a guy that just was a huge guy to me. And then Oliver [Stone], [Brian] De Palma and [Steven]

Soderbergh. I've had a good run. I've had some people in-between. [laughs] But, y'know, nobody in my family was remotely connected to this business; nobody ever told me I was talented, coming up. It was just a flat-out dream. Somehow, it worked out for me. I'm testament that it can happen. I didn't have any special privileges or talent.

What do you think was the thing that turned it from a dream to reality?

I wasn't going to say no. I went into it 100 per cent as a serious business. Today, a lot of my experiences with young actors is they just can't wait to get 100,000 followers or they can't wait to get their next movie. I go, "Wait, man, you have to knock this one out of the park first." If somebody can call you a professional, that's the highest compliment, to me.

You said Soderbergh was great to work with on *Erin Brockovich*. That film also made you famous and a heartthrob...

I wish somebody would have told me that!



FIVE STAR TURNS

IN THE COMPANY OF MEN 1997

Eckhart has his Brigham Young Uni chum Neil LaBute to thank for his breakthrough role as Chad, the white-collar misogynist who toys with the emotions of a deaf colleague.

ERIN BROCKOVICH 2000

An adolescence spent surfing in Hawaii and skiing in the Alps was a good preparation for playing George, the laidback biker who minds the kids while Julia Roberts rights wrongs.

THE DARK KNIGHT 2008

Robert Kennedy was one of the real-life politicians Eckhart drew on to inform Harvey Dent, the 'White Knight' of Gotham who becomes the monstrous Two-Face.

RABBIT HOLE 2010

Nicole Kidman might have got the Oscar nod but Eckhart matched her beat for beat in this story of a grieving couple's different ways of dealing with their son's death.

OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN 2013

Another Kennedy, JFK this time, gave Aaron the key to Benjamin Asher, "A youthful, physical commander-in-chief who can take care of himself. You don't usually see the President head-butting people." **NS**





AARON ECKHART

What was the experience like of working on that and with a huge star like Julia Roberts?

I remember, I was at a Sundance party in '97 and Soderbergh was there. Steven could obviously have picked anybody for that role. We just happened to be chatting before that, and he asked me to do it. And at that time he was the quintessential independent filmmaker.

So I felt like we were just doing another independent film. The fact that it was with Julia Roberts and there was a bigger budget and it was a studio really didn't make a difference for Steven. Because he works small, he works effortlessly. I think that that probably worked to Julia's benefit as well, and the whole cast's. Because we'd finish at the end of the day and feel like we didn't even work.

We spoke to the director of *Bleed For This*, Ben Younger, and he said that when he showed the film to Soderbergh, he didn't recognise you for 10 minutes...

Maybe he just doesn't remember me! [laughs] That role scared the shit out of me. I didn't want to do it. You know, gaining the weight and doing the [Rhode Island] accent – you know, I'm not an accent guy. I did the accent 24 hours a day. If I got a phone call, [adopts heavy accent] "Yeah, waddya want?" Everybody knew where I was on the set because I would just walk around going, "Waddya talking about? Hey Vinny!"

There's a lot of buzz for you getting an Oscar nomination for this role. Is that something that's important personally or professionally for you?

I think what's important about Oscar talk is that your peers are talking about you in a way that means that you've impressed them or that you've got their attention. I think that's the most important thing to me. But obviously to have ["Oscar nominee"] precede your name on any film, on any billboard, can't hurt.

Obviously, your cachet goes up in town and you become more relevant. But it's interesting, although obviously every actor would like to go to the big shows, as I say, it doesn't necessarily translate into career earnings or career success. We can name probably 10 people off the tops of our heads who got Oscars, whose careers then took nosedives.

I'm not going to hold my breath, but for [co-star] Miles [Teller], for Ben, I think they definitely should be in the conversation. It wouldn't be important to me to win an



AARON ECKHART IN NUMBERS

\$572.8m

Leading man worldwide box office.

6'2"

Eckhart's height.

1

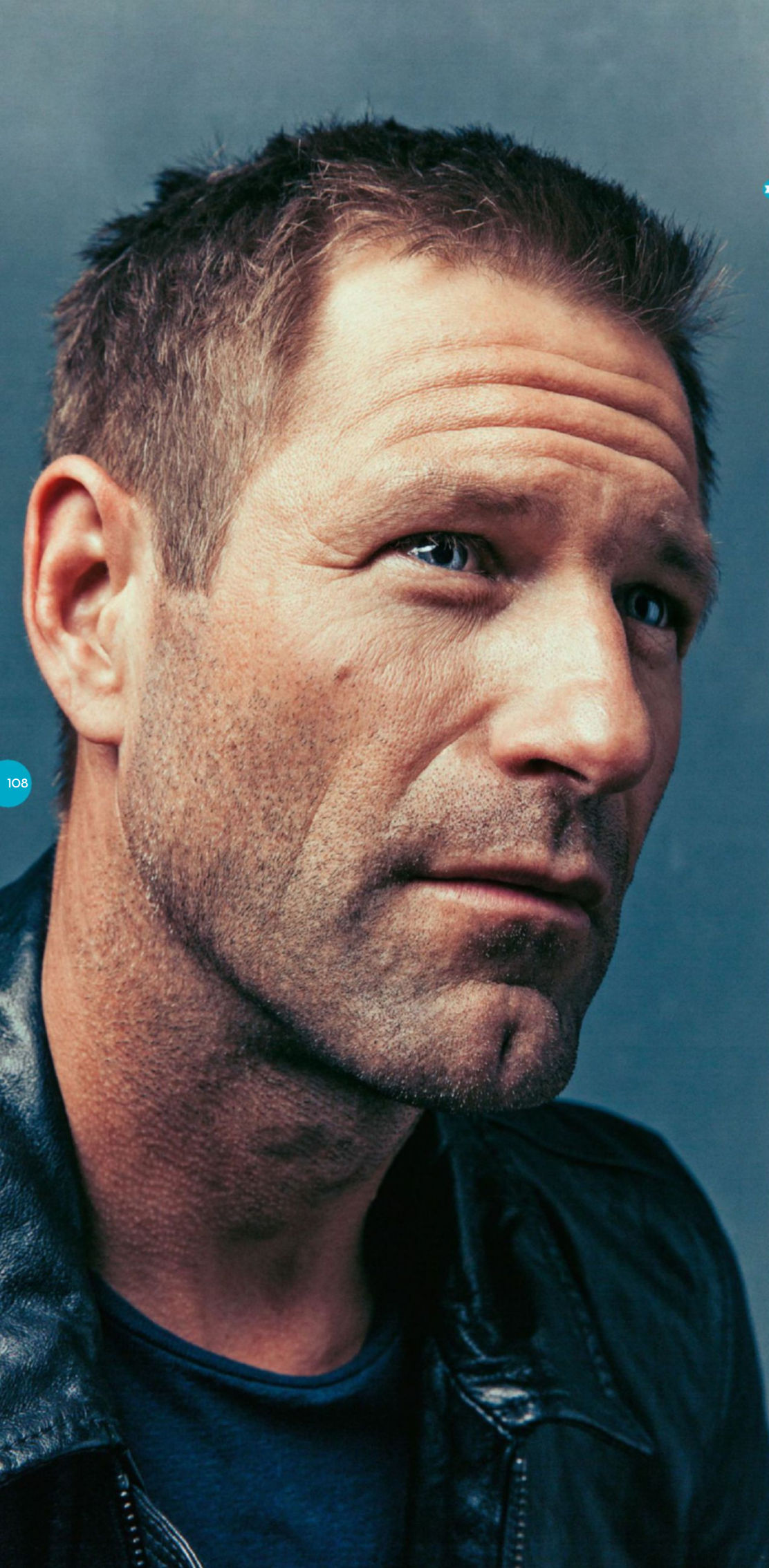
Number of times Two-Face and Harvey Dent have been portrayed on-screen by the same actor.

\$1.4bn

Supporting actor worldwide box office.

13

The age Eckhart was when he lived in the UK.



➡ Oscar. What is important to me is to be able to do work that would be considered worthy of an Oscar.

The Academy often rewards physical change so that goes in your favour! But you seem happy to physically change for a role despite having what they call 'leading man looks'?

I think I have a harder time accepting the role of the leading man. I think any chance I get, I try to play against it. That's where I feel more comfortable. I like to have the impediments and the physical changes that a role requires, so that I can distance myself from what I see in the mirror every single day. It's easier to fall into the character and the role.

I gained weight for *Your Friends & Neighbors* – 45lb, 50lb for that – and that really helped me. Coming off Chad, I think it was impressive to people that a quote-unquote “good-looking leading man” kind of guy would “ugly” himself up, as it were, or not try to play to his looks. The character parts are more fun to play. In *Thank You For Smoking* I was playing a guy who was hated, so I could play against my looks with that.

Where does playing a good-looking POTUS register in that scale, for *Olympus Has Fallen* and *London Has Fallen*?

Oh, I'm playing the second banana in that. As far as that goes, it's not really a role that you can do much in. I call myself a backpack, you know, that Gerard [Butler] just sort of threw around! I did those because [Olympus Has Fallen director] Antoine [Fuqua] asked me as a favour and I enjoyed doing it. The second one... I had hoped to have had more to do. I'm sorry that that wasn't the case. But I had hoped to make the President a little bit more capable in terms of survival, to take care of himself, to add to the action. And unfortunately, that didn't happen. I don't look at those as seminal career moments for me.

Do you view it as another genre to tick off on your résumé?

Yeah, I did it, and I had a good time doing it, and people love those movies. I love to run around and to get fighting and take care of business and all that sort of stuff. And I hope to do more of that. I'm not too old to do that yet! But I do think it's important to get back to independent film, to get back to having a budget, having limitations, having to make do with what you have. I think it's more creative in that way. And you don't have so much pressure

to put on yourself to please a wide audience. You know you're not going to get everybody, so you don't have the pressure. That's not guiding your every move.

That feeling of being guided by the wider audience's wishes is something that comes up with social media, which you mentioned being hugely important to some younger actors. You joined Twitter but have never tweeted. How do you feel about that side of the acting business?

Jack Nicholson said it best. He said, "Never let them know who you are." And social media is betraying that sentiment. I think there's a lot of pressure for people to be all things to all people. The problem with that is that Twitter is also an excellent vehicle for people to have blowback on you. If they get to know you, they come to resent you, and they come to have opinions and they own you.

So all of a sudden, you're working for this invisible web out there, instead of working for your own trust and your own instincts and your own wants and desires. You become a slave to this sort of consciousness out there, and you believe that they want you to do one thing, and you can't do anything else because it won't fit into their paradigm of what they believe is who you are. The problem then is – is it prohibiting you from getting jobs because you don't have enough? And is it getting you jobs because you have enough? Once we start hiring actors on their Twitter accounts is when everything just goes bad. To me, this whole idea of 'how many followers do you have?' and 'if you follow me, I'll follow you back...' There's a certain vanity and a certain desperation in that.

I'd rather not deal with that. Although I like Twitter for my news, as an actor, I think that the less we know about our



Eckhart plays Miles Teller's boxing coach in *Bleed For This*.

IT WOULDN'T BE IMPORTANT TO ME TO WIN AN OSCAR

actors when they get on screen, the more ability we have to just melt into their performance. But if having followers is the criteria, then I'm going to have to make some adjustments and get some followers real fast. Will you follow me? Because then I'll have 12,001.

Absolutely. But there's nothing there to follow.
Nothing! [laughs]

Do you feel the same about fame?

You worked with Amber Heard and Johnny Depp on *The Rum Diaries* and we've seen their fame blow up recently on a very personal level...

Yeah. Now, I won't mention names – but now they have to be concerned about their image. People who once loved those people, maybe don't love them as much

anymore. So it does have an effect on box office. It does affect how producers and studios look at you. My whole thing is: don't get in trouble, man. Just stay out of trouble. The more you're in the public eye, the more likely you'll get in trouble.

Along with *Sully* and *Bleed For This* you're also starring in Jason Blum's micro-budget chiller, *Incarnate*, this autumn. Why did you want to do horror?

It's Jason Blum, who I like very much. We sort of took a shot. We made that a couple of years ago, and made it for a budget. It's a pure horror movie – I'll say that.

And there's money in those...

Well, we'll see. Either there is, or I've just made a movie without getting paid!

SULLY AND BLEED FOR THIS BOTH OPEN IN CINEMAS ON 2 DECEMBER. INCARNATE IS YET TO RECEIVE A UK RELEASE DATE.

AARON ECKHART FAN CLUB

"He's always somebody that I've admired over the years and wanted to work with."

Christopher Nolan

"[He's] got a leading man's face, but he's really a character actor. He really is adept at kind of getting into somebody else's skin."

Neil LaBute

"He's just great and so talented and [has] such a wicked sense of humour."

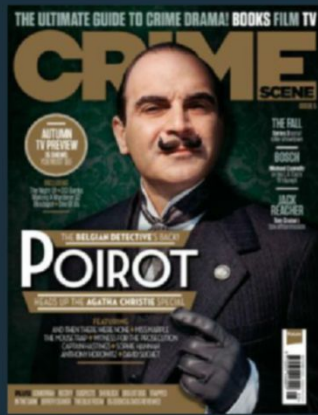
Jennifer Aniston

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SMALL SCREEN

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DARK & FULL OF ERRORS

★★★★★

BOREDOM IS COMING

**FILM
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OF THE
MONTH**

GAMES CHANGER

WHY GOT'S SIXTH SEASON
IS A GENUINE EYE-OPENER

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TV previewed
with Class.

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**FILM
DISC
OF THE
MONTH**

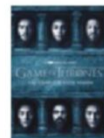
winter rises

HODOR'S PAINS, CERSEI'S MONSTER. HBO'S HARD-HITTER GETS REVELATORY...

GAME OF THRONES: S6 18

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2016 **OUT 14 NOVEMBER** DVD, BD **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Featurettes, Making Of's, Deleted scenes



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THEATRE OF BLOOD 1973

Two words: poodle pie. Did Arya borrow from Vincent Price's cookery-based vengeance?

CARRIE 1976

"You are small men..." The Khaleesi goes total Carrie White on the Khals.

SUBURRA 2015

Ramsay should heed this flick's message: be nicer to your dogs.

It's not an easy thing, admitting to yourself what you really are," we're told in the boldest run of HBO's boldest series. Yet after Season 5's shake-up of character roles, Season 6 pulls off a tough job with roaring confidence. As the end-Game looms (just two shortened seasons to go), showrunners David Benioff and D.B. Weiss lay bare what their characters are made of as they trace homeward journeys. And in a series this character-rich, that's tantamount to revealing what the show is made of.

So while the Faith Militant continue to erase captives' identities, the revelations of Melisandre's (Carice van Houten) hidden wrinkles and Jon Snow's (Kit Harington) hidden history bookend this season. In between, the heart-breaking origins of Bran's protector Hodor (Kristian Nairn) receive attention. Cersei (Lena Headey) parades

about with a monster as protector and another inside – when she says that her children give her hope that she isn't all bad, you do wonder what might happen should she lose that hope.

Peter Dinklage's Tyrion breaks himself down nicely: "I drink, and I know things." At a brothel, Yara Greyjoy (Gemma Whelan) goads her

broken brother Theon (Alfie Allen) into re-embracing "the real Theon Greyjoy". In Braavos and elsewhere, Arya Stark (Maisie Williams) lets her name be known to those who want it erased. Meanwhile, a big, scar-faced man accepts who he is after time adrift. "You're a fighter," he's told. So he rams an axe up a bloke's crotch.

BARE WITCH

If anyone feared *Thrones* might lose cogeny or clout as the show outpaces George R.R. Martin's books, Season 6 incinerates doubts like wildfire. True, finesse seems lacking to start. The dialogue feels less layered, while the reliance on Big Shocks – Witch! Dead men walking! Dorne women lunging! – risks inducing revelation fatigue.

Yet once you adjust to the rapid pace after Season 5's stealthy deck shuffle, it becomes clear how the revelations draw great heft from well-wrought



Christmas was a bit bleak this year...



carefully integrated into the cruel terms of a world in which revenge is a dish best served cooked in a pie or dragon-flamed. Even Tyrion, a man unlikely to admit faith in much beyond wine, declares faith in Dany.

Not that we should expect the end to run smoothly, or surprise-free. Even 50-60 hours in, *Thrones* springs some of its most emotive, spectacular and distressing jaw-droppers yet. The Hodor episode reminds us of the big, pounding heart beneath the show's cruelty. 'Battle Of The Bastards' is a mud 'n' blood epic of cinema-class brutality – and it's only one instance in a season rammed with cine-standard images, from the Waif's T-1000-ish pursuit of Arya to Cersei's well-dressed big moment.

As for the Cersei-ruled climax, episode 10 contains enough triumph, tragedy and twisted smirks to set up the end-stretch. No-one wants to see *Thrones* go, but the beauty of Season 6 is how Benioff and Weiss prove they're not just counting down the cast-members. Even if Seasons 7/8 bring such fan-ticipated moments as Cleganebowl or a dragons-vs-walkers war, it's the evidence of a shape being worked out that makes Season 6 so satisfying. (Well, that and Arya's great post-Braavos bake-off.) "The past is gone for good," we're told. But *Thrones'* future, brief though it might be, couldn't look more enticing.

While you wait, gorge on the extras. Every episode gets a commentary, while the ample Making Of's include one on 'Battle Of The Bastards', which manages to look even deadlier behind the scenes. **Kevin Harley**

themes. Choice, freedom, revenge and the rise of the women number among the engines this time, from the moment Theon and Sansa (Sophie Turner) flee the devilish Ramsay Bolton (Iwan Rheon) and face two options: Ramsay's hounds or the icy water?

For Sansa, water means escape. For Benioff and Weiss, her escape is, arguably, an answer to the charges of misogyny dogging the show. You could call the stress on Sansa's revenge a cynical get-out clause from those criticisms, but her slow-burn retaliation was teased on Season 5's disc commentaries. And it's too intricately woven into Season 6's themes and, indeed, the show's overall route, to be easily dismissed.

There's a clear sense of investments being paid off this time. Consider Arya's murder of [no spoilers here], with its delicious Red Wedding echoes. And two Dany (Emilia Clarke) moments stand out: if her fiery gotcha recalls Season 1, her confab with Yara is pivotal. "Our fathers were evil men," she says. "We're going to leave the world better than we found it..."

CERSEI AND BELIEVE

Such lines perhaps offer clues to *Thrones'* future and reassurances to those who feared its body count might become deadening, even in a season with a colossal body count. Hints of guarded optimism emerge, a shift made doubly impressive because it's

TOP
There's a reason everybody's scared of Cersei's shadow.

MIDDLE
"Have you seen my watch? I last had it about eight bodies ago..."

'AFTER SEASON 5'S SHAKE-UP, SEASON 6 PULLS OFF A TOUGH JOB WITH CONFIDENCE'

His goggles had ruined the look-alike competition.



x-rated

X-CELLENT OR JUST X-MEH?

X-MEN: APOCALYPSE 12 TBC

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 24 OCTOBER Digital HD 7 NOVEMBER DVD, BD, 3D BD, Digital HD

In a year when Batman and Superman duked it out and Marvel fought a civil war, Bryan Singer's *First Class* trilogy-capper can't help but feel low-key for the *X-Men*, especially after the gang played their dual-cast trump card two years ago in epic time-hopper *Days Of Future Past*.

For Singer, though, this is closure after bailing on *The Last Stand* (cheekily referenced in a threequels gibe) and a chance to square the circle he started in 2000. With parts for every major mutant – *First Class* returnees as well as some smartly (re)cast old faces – this is, as screenwriter Simon Kinberg observes on his commentary with Singer, “The origin story for the X-Men.”

With so much to get through, the results vary. A tragic new chapter in Magneto's life gives Michael Fassbender scope to add emotional depth, while

newcomers Tye Sheridan and Kodi Smit-McPhee make an impact as Cyclops and Nightcrawler. Yet Alexandra Shipp's Storm is reduced to an onlooker, and *Apocalypse* (Oscar Isaac) is sadly a generic threat.

For the second *X-Men* in a row, Evan Peters' Quicksilver brings the biggest thrills in a rescue mission set to the Eurythmics, a rare moment to inspire nostalgia for the 1980s setting, though the disc's deleted scenes include a John Hughes-esque mall trip with a dancing Nightcrawler. **Simon Kinnear**



WARCRAFT 12

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes (BD), Deleted scenes

Duncan Jones goes full-fantasy for this *Warcraft* adap as masses of orcs led by Durotan (Toby Kebbell) and Gul'dan (Daniel Wu) leave their dying world for Azeroth, where humans ruled by King Llane (Dominic Cooper) are none too pleased to see them. The ambition is plain to see but CGI overload and rushed, crushed plotting compromise any chance of *Lord Of The Rings*-style poetry, mythology or majesty. Still, kudos to a green, be-tusked Paula Patton, who half-convinces as half-human, half-orc warrior Garona. **Jamie Graham**



MAGGIE'S PLAN TBC

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT 31 OCTOBER DVD, BD, Digital HD EXTRAS Featurette (BD), Commentary (BD), Deleted scenes (BD)

On paper, Rebecca Miller's Woody Allen-esque comedy looks like kooky try-hard hipster mumblecore. Maggie (Greta Gerwig) has an affair with a married 'ficto-critical anthropologist' (Ethan Hawke, deliciously self-obsessed), stealing him from wife (Julianne Moore), but she contrives to reunite the former spouses once the honeymoon period wears off. The plot unfolds with characters wearing odd knitwear while discussing art in shabby-chic apartments. Should be infuriating, but thanks to organic performances and a smart script, it's engaging and funny. **Jane Crowther**



VIRAL 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

OUT NOW DVD, BD, VOD EXTRAS None

After disposable tech thriller *Nerve*, Henry Joost and Ariel Schulman (*Catfish*) embrace more visceral material in their solid second film of 2016. Squidgy parasites and sisterly love mix in a Cronenberg-does-*Frozen* set-up, in which Sofia Black-D'Elia sticks by parasite-infected sister Analeigh Tipton in a tense contagion-control set-up. The plot's rushed but Joost/Schulman invest conviction in direct-to-VOD horror fare. The gross effects make the most of a tapeworm-thin budget, while Tipton and Black-D'Elia's chemistry ensures the feelings at stake worm their way under your skin. **Kevin Harley**

the round-up

Hamsters, sharks, gods, Jedward and Tom Hanks...



THE CONJURING 2 15

FILM **★★★★★** EXTRAS **★★★★★**

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes, Deleted scenes

This second reimagining of cases by real-life paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren (Patrick Wilson, Vera Farmiga) lacks its predecessor's hard-earned naturalism. This time, the duo visit England, where Enfield schoolgirl Janet Hodgson (Madison Wolfe) is going full *Exorcist*. If the retro production design still expertly evokes the chilling sight of 1970s chintz, director James Wan is less sure-footed this time. A pretty simple scare-story ends up caught between half-hearted thematic ambition (is the possession hoax or horror?) and franchise bloat. **Simon Kinnear**



THE MARTIAN: EXTENDED CUT 15

FILM **★★★★★** EXTRAS **★★★★★**

OUT NOW DVD, BD, 4K Ultra HD

EXTRAS Commentary, Featurettes, Gag reel

Ridley Scott's best film since *Gladiator* gets a two-disc Blu-ray makeover with 10 minutes of scenes woven back in (to an already hefty 144-minute running time) as Matt Damon's stranded astronaut figures out how to survive life on Mars. Scott is renowned for knowing exactly what he wants on set, so the additional moments here are hardly crucial (Kristen Wiig's media director on a rant; Damon finishing his mission etc.) but do add some nice character details. New extras include a Scott/Goddard/Andy Weir commentary. **James Mottram**



LOVE & FRIENDSHIP U

FILM **★★★★★** EXTRAS **★★★★★**

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurette

Whit Stillman's whip-smart adaptation of a Jane Austen novella about a gold-digging widow crackles with fun. The comedy of manners he honed in *Damsels In Distress* hitches up a gear as Kate Beckinsale's engagingly wicked Lady Susan wreaks havoc among the aristos in her rapacious search for a rich husband. Chloë Sevigny's gossipy Yankee accomplice adds to the general gaiety. But Tom Bennett's blitheringly idiotic young lord, as dim as he is obscenely wealthy, is the film's finest comic creation. **Kate Stables**



Probably a good idea to swerve *Gods Of Egypt* (★, out 24 October, DVD, BD), a blingtastic blitzkrieg of bad CGI so gaudy it makes *RuPaul's Drag Race* look restrained.

Far better is *Closet Monster* (★★★★, out now, DVD), an impressive debut by director Stephen Dunn – a dark, off-kilter indie about a sexually confused teen (Connor Jessup) who talks to his pet hamster (voiced by Isabella Rossellini).

Tom Hanks plays a failed salesman questing for redemption in sweet, soul-searching Saudi story *A Hologram For The King* (★★★★, out now, DVD, BD) in which quirky humour sadly succumbs to a lacklustre romance.

There's nothing lacklustre about *Suburra* (★★★★, out now, DVD, BD), Stefano Sollima's (TV's *Gomorra*) violent Rome-set roundelay of political corruption and gang warfare.



THE LEGEND OF TARZAN TBC

FILM **★★★★★** EXTRAS **★★★★★**

OUT NOW DVD, BD, 3D BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Featurettes

Alexander Skarsgård does the jungle boogie in a well-appointed but uncalled-for reboot that turns Edgar Rice Burroughs' vine-swinging ape man into an apologetic poster-boy for white guilt. Drawn back to the Congo, his genteel Lord Greystoke soon unleashes the beast within when Christoph Waltz's nasty Belgian makes off with Margot Robbie's far from plain Jane. David Yates' rethink, alas, remains buttoned-down throughout, being too proud to embrace the clichés of the Weissmuller era. **Neil Smith**



THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE U

FILM **★★★★★** EXTRAS **★★★★★**

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD

EXTRAS Shorts, Deleted scenes, Featurettes

Any doubts about a throw-and-smash app being strung out into a movie are founded in this uneven story with otherwise fun characters. Jason Sudeikis voices Red, the original angry bird sent to anger management classes where he meets Josh Gad's Chuck (yellow, fast) and Danny McBride's Bomb (black, explodey). It takes 30 minutes for their piggy adversaries to arrive and even longer for things to catapult toward the predictable climax. Non-app fans will want to rage-quit at the midpoint. **Matt Looker**



REMAINDER 15

FILM **★★★★★** EXTRAS **★★★★★**

OUT 24 OCTOBER DVD, BD

EXTRAS Making Of

Having suffered an accident, an amnesiac (Tom Sturridge) uses his compensation to reconstruct fleeting memories, an endeavour that grows increasingly elaborate... The most obvious comparison is *Synecdoche, New York*, but *Remainder* (adapted from Tom McCarthy's 2005 novel, which pre-dates Charlie Kaufman's movie) has a strange, alienating tone – one which builds as the young man becomes more estranged from reality, growing into a cold, heartless obsessive. More intriguing than engrossing. **Stephen Kelly**



Finally, *Sharknado: The Fourth Awakens* (★, out now, DVD) darkens our TVs with yet more twisters and Z-list stars, including *Real Housewives*, vloggers and Jedward (again). The joke's long since run out of puff.

that slinking feline

HORROR CLASSIC PURRS ON CRITERION...

CAT PEOPLE *PG*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1942 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Interviews, Documentary, Booklet

There aren't many producers who can qualify as auteurs – but Val Lewton does. Between 1942 and 1946, working for RKO's cut-price second-feature unit, he produced a series of subtle, stylish horror movies that, no matter who was directing, unmistakably carry his personal stamp. "The films he produced belonged to him," comments Martin Scorsese in this disc's accompanying doc. Turning his shoestring budgets into a strength, Lewton worked on the principle that what you can't see is way scarier than what you can. "If you make the screen dark enough," he remarked, "the mind's eye will read into it anything you want."

Cat People, the first of his films for RKO, made back its cost a dozen times over and hauled the studio out of its latest financial crisis. Sensual, kitten-faced French actress Simone Simon (*La Bête Humaine*) is perfectly cast as Irena, the girl who turns into a panther when her passions are aroused.

A Serbian immigrant in New York, she marries a stolid American guy called Oliver Reed (no, really) played by

Kent Smith, but won't consummate. When he starts to fall for a colleague, Irena's jealousy is aroused – at one point, she stalks her rival to a nocturnal indoor swimming pool.

This scene, all ripples and shadows, is riveting, and showcases the skills of DP Nick Musuraca, one of the great noir cinematographers. Criterion's 2K transfer brings up all the lighting, sharp and luminous. **Philip Kemp**



Her mother had warned her about knobs.



EARLY MURNAU: FIVE FILMS 1921-1925 *PG*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1921-1925 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Commentary, Video essays, Featurettes, Booklet

Along with Fritz Lang, F.W. Murnau was the presiding genius of the great age of German silent cinema. Eureka has lavished HD restoration and Blu-ray on this batch of his films, which includes Murnau's masterly social satire *The Last Laugh* (★★★★★), his comedy *The Grand Duke's Finances* (★★★★★) and his Molière adaptation *Tartuffe* (★★★★★). Two lesser-known movies make up the package: mystery *Schloss Vogelöd* (★★★★) and melodrama *Phantom* (★★★★). **Philip Kemp**



THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH *18*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1976 **OUT 24 OCTOBER** DVD, BD, DIGITAL HD

EXTRAS Interviews, Featurettes

David Bowie plays the ultimate fish out of water in Nicolas Roeg's dazzling space oddity, given a spruced-up 4K restoration for its 40th anniversary. The late icon utterly convinces in his first leading role as the lonely starman who comes to Earth looking for water to ferry back to his drought-ridden planet, but is distracted by love and thwarted by corruption, booze and big business. Extras include interviews with director and writer, and the story behind its near-mythical 'Lost Soundtrack'. **Ali Catterall**



THE HILLS HAVE EYES *18*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

1977 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD **EXTRAS** Booklet, Commentary, Alternate ending, Interviews

You come out here and stick your life in my face?!" growls a mutant cannibal, just before he tucks into some braised ex-cop corpse in Wes Craven's original, impossibly influential genre masterwork (his second after *Last House On The Left*). *Hills* sees a family of rather hateful WASPs falling foul of their mountain-dwelling counterparts, amid desert boulders resembling giant skulls, before turning the tables. Arrow's excellent new 4K restoration also includes an alternative ending, essays and interviews. **Ali Catterall**

TOTAL FILM COMPETITION



**OUT
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WIN! EXCLUSIVE MOVIE PROPS & A BLU-RAY COPY OF X-MEN: APOCALYPSE!



Just when you thought it couldn't get any bigger than *Days Of Future Past*, along comes the truly gargantuan *X-Men: Apocalypse*. Bryan Singer's back at the helm, assembling a powerhouse cast including Jennifer Lawrence, James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender, Sophie Turner and Olivia Munn – plus Oscar Isaac as the world's first and most powerful mutant, Apocalypse.

Bulging with special features, *X-Men: Apocalypse* arrives on Digital HD from 24 October and on Blu-ray, 4K Ultra HD and DVD from 7 November. To celebrate, we've teamed up with Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment to offer

a money-can't-buy prize: props from the film! You could be the owner of an Xavier's School agenda, a CIA badge and mug, plus a tall biohazard canister. One winner will bag all this plus *X-Men: Apocalypse* on Blu-ray. Ten runners-up will receive a copy of the film. For a chance to win, answer the following question...

**HOW MANY X-MEN FILMS HAS
BRYAN SINGER DIRECTED?**

A 3 B 4 C 5

TO ENTER ONLINE GO TO [HTTP://BIT.LY/TF252COMP](http://bit.ly/TF252COMP)

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synth cities

CHANNEL 4'S HIT A.I. SHOW IS GOING GLOBAL...

HUMANS: SERIES 2

To see Gemma Chan move as a synth is to realise how inelegant you really are. She doesn't slouch, for a start. She doesn't cross her arms or bite her nails or shift her weight from foot to foot. She stands pure, symmetrical; using the body the way it's meant to be used: head upright, shoulders straight, weight balanced on the first three toes – free from all the fidgety quirks of our nature. She strides across a room with poise, she sits herself down with grace, she turns to a co-star and says – in character, as Mia – “I care for someone... A human.”

Synths, of course, are what made *Humans* a hit; the sci-fi drama in which subservient, anthropomorphic robots have become the norm for mankind. Adapted from Swedish show *Real Humans*, it became Channel 4's highest rating drama in 20 years; a success, you would assume, that has a lot to do with its approach to artificial intelligence, and what it means for our future. An unease that we can all relate to.

“I feel like the show tapped into a lot of things,” says Chan, her shoulders

now relaxed. “It's not a huge leap in terms of technology. Obviously we're not ‘there’ yet but setting it in a parallel present made people feel that this was a world they could recognise. Also, I think the synths allow us to question ourselves; [they're] a way of exploring what it actually means to be human. And I think people responded to that.”

Although spread across several storylines – each one dealing with a different facet of synth society

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

REAL HUMANS
The British version is more grounded than its Swedish original, which is bright and kitschy.

EX MACHINA
When *Humans* was released last year, it was hard not to draw parallels with Alex Garland's A.I. thriller.

BLACK MIRROR
Like the techno-paranoia of *Black Mirror*? *Humans* has you sorted.

– the driving force of *Humans*' first series was sentence: the revelation that a genius called David Elster (Stephen Boxer) had cracked the code of consciousness, and created a group of renegade conscious synths. One of which was Chan's Mia, who spent most of Series 1 buried in the programming of Anita, a domestic synth bought by the Hawkins family, headed by lawyer Laura (Katherine Parkinson) and factory worker Joe (Tom Goodman-Hill). Others include the naïve Max (Ivanhoe Jeremiah); the ‘Mona Lisa’ of synths Fred (Sope Dirisu); Karen (Ruth Bradley), created to replace Elster's late wife; Elster's part-synth son Leo (Colin Morgan); and the violent and resentful Niska (Emily Berrington), who finished Series 1 by making off with the elusive programme for consciousness.

COTTAGE INDUSTRY

Whether or not Niska will unleash a full-on synth revolution, however,





Serious times with Max (Ivanhoe Jeremiah) and Leo (Colin Morgan).



– hiding in plain sight – at a café on the coast, because they still need money for food and supplies. So Leo's essentially rented her out to work in this café, which can't afford human staff and can't afford their own synth."

This leads to Mia developing feelings for the aforementioned human; a sign that if Series 1 was about synths coming to terms with consciousness, then Series 2 is perhaps about exploring what consciousness actually means.

DARK HORIZONS

"You see for the first time, from Mia's point of view, her own will and desires, and her being able to act on them," says Chan. "I think that's important because in the first series she was always trapped in her own body, or having to fulfil the role she was made for – to look after her family, to look after Leo. So yes, there's kind of a love story happening but it's not going to be a happy-ever-after love story. She's still a bit naïve, and things gets dark. A big theme of this series, and what Leo and Mia have been arguing about is, 'what does it mean to live as opposed to just survive?' That's the big question."

Stephen Kelly

HUMANS SERIES 2 BEGINS AIRING ON CHANNEL 4 THIS MONTH.

is unknown. Her storyline, along with many others, is being kept firmly under wraps. What is certain is that Series 2 is where *Humans* starts to open up. In one sense this means a more global story. For example, the show's newest and most exciting cast member, Carrie-Anne Moss, expands the story to California, where her character, A.I. expert Dr. Athena Morrow, is hired by a young Silicon Valley billionaire (Marshall Allman) for a secret project.

Yet in another sense, it's where *Humans* starts to open up its characters; especially the main gang

of conscious synths, most of whom are now hiding in a cottage beside the seaside. (In reality, we're at an abandoned farm in Cheddington, Buckinghamshire. The external, coastal scenes are filmed in Margate).

"Everything's changed," says Chan. "Max, Mia and Leo have found a hideaway by the coast and they're trying to move on with their lives. Leo and Max are preoccupied with trying to help the newly awakened synths, which are starting to appear. Mia is actually, for the first time, trying to work out who she is. She is working

TOP

Mia (Gemma Chan) makes a new friend.

ABOVE

Niska (Emily Berrington) and Laura (Katherine Parkinson).

'PART OF THIS SERIES IS ASKING, WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE AS OPPOSED TO JUST SURVIVE?'

Extra, extra!

Also hitting TV screens in the coming months...

SUPergirl: SEASON 2 (SKY 1) 24 OCT

Kara gets a boost from her US network switch – plus a special guest appearance by cousin Superman.

THE WALKING DEAD: SEASON 7 (FOX) 24 OCT

Following on from last episode's brutal battering by Jeffrey Dean Morgan's Negan, we'll finally find out... who died?

THE FLASH: SEASON 3 (SKY 1) 25 OCT

The fastest man alive will have to deal with the consequences of his time-travelling shenanigans in last season's cliffhanger.



pope dreams

PRAY SILENCE FOR THE PAOLO SORRENTINO AND JUDE LAW TEAM-UP...

THE YOUNG POPE

Jude Law squaring up to a marsupial? It's just one of the wilder moments of Paolo Sorrentino's *The Young Pope*. "My relationship with the kangaroo was one of my favourite relationships in this," Law chuckles. "There's a whole journey with it." The British actor, taking the lead in the 10-part odyssey, plays Lenny Belardo, the first American Pontiff – a Holy Father unlike any other. As the saying goes, "We have a Pope."

Making him a US citizen is a typically delicious conceit from Sorrentino, the Oscar-winning director behind *The Great Beauty*. "I had my own idea of a Pope like no other," says the enigmatic Italian when *Small Screen* meets him at the Venice Film Festival, where *The Young Pope*'s first two episodes premiered. "He's the opposite to the traditional Papal figure. Mine is young, American, handsome... and very charming. We're used to old, middle-aged and not-so-charming Popes."

Elected under the belief that he will be easy to manipulate, Lenny turns out to be a singular schemer and self-described irritant. Even his chosen

papal moniker, Pius XIII, is a shocking reminder of the divisive wartime Pius XII. While Sorrentino snaffled elements from various real-life papal figures – including Pope Benedict XVI's smoking habit – Law didn't base his interpretation on anyone specific. "It was more important I worked out his moral code and the way in which he interacts with people," he says.

Alongside Law, there lines up an impressive pan-European and American cast, including Ludivine Sagnier, James Cromwell and Diane Keaton, who plays Sister Mary, Lenny's special advisor. "She was a bit reluctant in the beginning, because she feels she's a comedy actress and she was a bit uneasy at the idea of playing a dramatic character," reveals Sorrentino. "I insisted, telling her she did some marvellous dramatic performances when she was younger."

Working on an original Sky production (HBO and Canal+ co-produce), Sorrentino admits this move towards the gogglebox has been one born out of necessity. "It has become very tough for art house filmmakers to make long three- or four-hour features

as we used to, because it's difficult to find audiences for that kind of film," he says. "And television is a free space for us to be able to express and to make that kind of work."

With the production shot over six months, primarily at Rome's Cinecittà Studios, where the interiors of the Vatican were painstakingly recreated, Sorrentino and his crew (including regular cinematographer Luca Bigazzi) approached it as if it were a movie. "It was made like a 10-hour film," says Law. "We shot it like a movie, out of sequence. It was very intense."

Despite being Sorrentino's baby, episodes have been co-scripted, with regular Terry Gilliam scribe Tony Grisoni on board. Does he envisage a second series? "There might be other seasons," nods Sorrentino. Of course, the big question is how Italians will react to this very unusual portrayal of the head of the Catholic Church? "I haven't got the faintest idea," he grins. "Reactions are unpredictable." Amen to that. **James Mottram**

THE YOUNG POPE BEGINS ON 27 OCTOBER ON SKY ATLANTIC.

ARROW: SEASON 5 (SKY 1) 26 OCT
After last season's magic-centric plot, the forerunner of DC's ever-awesome TV-verse will be returning to more down-to-earth heroics.

GOOD GIRLS REVOLT (AMAZON PRIME) 28 OCT
Filling that *Mad Men* void, this '69-set show follows researchers in a newsroom at a time of vast cultural change.

THE CROWN (NETFLIX) 4 NOV
The life and reign of Queen Elizabeth II. This Peter Morgan-scripted high-end drama has Emmy attention written all over it.

GILMORE GIRLS: A YEAR IN THE LIFE (NETFLIX) 25 NOV
The two Lorelais of Stars Hollow return for a special mini-series after a nine-year absence from their drama-filled lives.



tech noir

FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BLACK MIRROR...

BLACK MIRROR: S3

1 IT'S BIGGER THAN EVER

Black Mirror's move from Channel 4 to Netflix means more techno-paranoia than ever, with Series 3 featuring six episodes instead of three. According to creator Charlie Brooker, "There's more variety than ever in terms of tone and setting. We've got a sort of John Hughes romance; we've got a social media satire; we've got the closest we've ever got to a police procedural story; we've got a kind of horror romp; a contemporary kitchen-sink nightmare; and we've got a story set in the military. It's like *Black Mirror*, but more so."

2 WAIT A MINUTE, A JOHN HUGHES ROMANCE?!

Yep! The series' opening episode, 'San Junipero', is like nothing *Black Mirror* fans have seen before. "I was thinking that it would be great to open with something that people are not expecting," says Brooker, "and you're not expecting *Black Mirror* to open in

1987 California. You'd probably expect it to open with someone in the near-future, looking miserable, staring at an iPad and going, 'Argh, no, I see President Trump has released his androids and the singularity has happened.' Also, I was aware of some people going, 'I hope it doesn't become massively Americanised [*when it moves to Netflix*],' and thought it would be really funny to open *super-American*."

3 THERE'S MORE STAR POWER

Black Mirror has grown from a bracing, often dangerous idea to something that has resonated globally — thanks, in part, to Series 1 and 2 being made available on US Netflix in 2014. In Series 3, this has translated into star power. "That comes from two things," says Brooker. "First, because we're on Netflix and it's global

ABOVE

Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Mackenzie Davis head back to the '80s in the third series opener.

BELOW

The future's bleak for Bryce Dallas Howard.



that has an allure and attraction to it. But also, because we've had directors like [Atonement's] Joe Wright coming on board and that, again, brings actors like Bryce Dallas Howard and Alice Eve, who are starring in an episode ['Nosedive'] where everyone in the world is ranked and rated."

4 THE REAL WORLD IS CATCHING UP...

The bleak beauty of *Black Mirror* is in how it exaggerates contemporary paranoia. Yet, as technology advances faster and faster, does Brooker worry that the real world is beginning to catch up? "Oh God, yeah," he says. "For that reason, the stories this season are more far-flung than before. I probably wouldn't do 'The Waldo Moment' now looking at Donald Trump because you think, 'Well, it's not that far off.' Who could have foreseen David Cameron and the pig? I didn't see that fucking coming. I'm pretty sure he only triggered the referendum to get the old pig thing knocked down on his Wikipedia page."

5 IT'S BETTER SUITED TO NETFLIX

According to producer Annabel Jones, Channel 4 were "stalling to re-commission" *Black Mirror*, allowing Netflix to swoop in. Yet beyond business, the change from broadcaster to streaming service presents interesting opportunities for Brooker. "You don't have to cut for ad breaks," he says, "So our detective story, 'Hated In The Nation', is feature-length. They're all different lengths. They're roughly about an hour, but some of them are a bit shorter, and some are a bit longer. Anthology shows struggle on television because there are no characters returning or cliffhangers for you to come back to. Whereas you put it all on Netflix and you get this selection box delivered in one go and you can pick them out." **Stephen Kelly**

BLACK MIRROR SERIES 3 IS ON NETFLIX NOW.

THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE: SEASON 2 (AMAZON PRIME) 6 DEC

Alternate history continues to be made in this reality-bending drama imagining life in 1962 if the Nazis had won the war.

DIRK GENTLY'S HOLISTIC DETECTIVE AGENCY (NETFLIX) DEC

Douglas Adams' surreal sci-fi detective comes to life in this Max Landis-scripted show starring Elijah Wood.

TROLLHUNTERS (NETFLIX) DEC

Guillermo del Toro's new animated series about a teenage boy who discovers trolls living under his home town.

THE LAST DRAGONSLAYER (SKY 1) CHRISTMAS

Jasper Fforde's novel — set in a world where magic is real but being replaced by technology — gets a festive TV adap.



school of doc

COULD THIS DOCTOR WHO SPIN-OFF BE THE BRITISH BUFFY?
WE TRAVEL THROUGH TIME AND SPACE TO FIND OUT...

CLASS

The *Doctor Who* spin-off show is a rare and varied beast. Yet from *The Sarah Jane Adventures* to *Torchwood* to even, yes, *K-9 And Company*, they all share one question in common: What happens when the Doctor isn't around to save you? Latest spin-off, BBC3's *Class*, is set to the backdrop of Coal Hill School (the school of the Doctor's granddaughter, Susan, and the workplace of his last companion, Clara) and follows a group of teens as they face the threat of an alien force. "They say over and over again, 'How do we do this? We're not superheroes,'" says writer Patrick Ness.

Ness knows a thing or two about teenagers. He's a best-selling Young Adult author, whose award-winning *A Monster Calls* has been made into a forthcoming film starring Liam Neeson. His involvement with *Class* began two years ago, when he was approached by producer Brian Minchin.

"I thought, 'Ooh, I know how I'd do that,'" Ness tells us on set in Cardiff. "YA is all about agency. It's driven by a teenage character, their concerns are taken seriously, it's their choices that drive the narrative."

Class is an ensemble drama but its plot is powered by the show's two alien characters: teacher Miss Quill (Katherine Kelly) and teenager Charlie

(Greg Austin). Although not necessarily allies, the pair have been forced into hiding by a savage threat; the same one that massacred everyone and everything on their home planet. In possibly related news, years of time travel at Coal Hill School have caused the walls of time and space to thin – allowing monsters to slip through. Today, *Small Screen* is on set in Cardiff, watching the staging of a complicated scene in which a classroom is blown up.

As you'd expect, *Class* is more tonally mature than the child-friendly *Sarah Jane Adventures*, but isn't as grim and gritty as *Torchwood*. Instead, it's aiming for *Buffy* – sincerely exploring teen angst in a fantasy environment.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

DOCTOR WHO
An obvious choice, but *Class* is a must-watch for *Doctor Who* fans.

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER
Can there really be such a thing as a 'British *Buffy*'? We'll just have to find out...

TORCHWOOD
Although less adult, *Class* is closer in tone to *Torchwood* than *Doctor Who*.

"When the British talk about their school days, the phrase that they always use is 'a bit shit'," grins Ness. "We're not doing 'a bit shit'. Coal Hill is a place you'll want to go; these students are people you want to have as your friends; you want to go on these adventures. I really believe in writing for teenagers, and I also believe that when you get it right, it expands and appeals to everybody."

Of course, the show does share strong connective tissue with *Doctor Who*, and even features a cameo from the Twelfth Doctor himself, Peter Capaldi, in the first episode. Yet Ness is determined that *Class* not be enslaved by *Who* cameos, references or monsters.

"I wanted to see the Doctor as an alien again," he says. "If you had no familiarity with him and he shows up, what the hell do you think of him? But after that I feel like this show has to stand or fall on its own – this show is part of this absolutely fantastic tapestry and universe, but it's a big universe and, as a viewer, I want to experience new things." **Stephen Kelly**

CLASS AIRS FROM 22 OCTOBER ON BBC3.

DOCTOR WHO CHRISTMAS SPECIAL (BBC ONE) CHRISTMAS

Peter Capaldi will return as the Time Lord for a festive instalment before the new series starts in April 2017.

SHERLOCK: SEASON 4 (BBC ONE) JAN 2017

Benedict Cumberbatch's modern-day mastermind will have his wits fully tested by Toby Jones' mysterious villain.

24: LEGACY (SKY 1) FEB 2017

Ex-Army Ranger Eric Carter replaces Jack Bauer as the clock-watching counter-terrorist action man in this hopeful reboot.

GOTHAM: SEASON 3 (CHANNEL 5) EARLY 2017

Young Jim Gordon and even younger Bruce Wayne continue to fight supervillainy in the Dark Knight prequel.



fantastic voyage

RON HOWARD TALKS GETTING LOST IN SPACE...

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

TOTAL RECALL

This is what Mars might look like when it's fully colonised. Or maybe not...

CONTACT

Authenticity is the keyword as Jodie Foster seeks conclusive proof of alien activity.

THE MARTIAN

Ridley Scott strands Matt Damon on the Red Planet and keeps him alive with hard science.

MARS

Ron Howard and outer space have been entwined ever since Mork landed in Milwaukee in *Happy Days*. Having directed *Cocoon* and *Apollo 13*, he's now co-created and exec-produced *Mars*, a six-part series blending expert interviews and scripted drama to depict how we might make it to the Red Planet and what could happen if we got there.

Mixing scripted drama and unscripted interviews sounds like a potentially unwieldy premise...

That was part of the excitement and challenge. Instead of doing speculative sci-fi about a journey to Mars, we asked these big thinkers, like Elon Musk and Apollo 13 commander James Lovell, questions about what might it be like, what the risks are. So they're telling us why what we're seeing in the drama is possible, but in an artful rather than academic way. It's experimental, but it works. It satisfies your intellectual curiosity and captures your emotional imagination as well.

Would you ever want to be part of such a trip?

I love the spirit of exploration, but I'm not that kind of adventurer. I love that

my projects push me into worlds I'd otherwise be a little timid to explore. It hasn't been my long-held dream to go to Mars, but I'd sure figure out how to send some cameras up and help them with the editing!

From *4 Months, 3 Weeks And 2 Days* to *Anamaria Marinca* to *Django Unchained*'s Sammi Rotibi, you've got quite a diverse cast...

We wanted it to be an international project rather than a governmental agency, so it then became a matter of casting the most interesting people willing to tackle it as a labour of love. They spent a couple of weeks with [astronaut] Mae Jemison, who talked to all of them about the psychology of taking those risks and committing your life to these projects.

Why choose *Days Of Grace*'s Everardo Gout to direct?

I'd seen Everardo's feature, and loved his style and his spirit. We thought it was a great gamble, hiring an indie filmmaker rather than someone with 25 years experience of making historical dramas for television. He's really stretched the boundaries of what I thought was possible.

What is the enduring appeal of Mars for filmmakers?

There's always been that question of life on Mars, although nobody thinks there are humanoid species wandering around now. And Mars isn't seen as an endgame now, just an important next step. Everyone's dream is the same: we've got to be a multi-planet species in order to guarantee survival.

Are you a space geek?

I love space travel but it's not my obsession. Doing this has convinced me that getting to Mars is a great goal. We've set the drama in 2033, but 2016 is a tipping point, the year where going to Mars stopped being a whimsical idea for a lot of people.

When did the idea first grab you?

My earliest sense that it was a missed opportunity came during *Apollo 13*. Buzz Aldrin said that if we hadn't stopped, we could be at Mars by now. When we interviewed Elon for the series, he said that we could just about get to Mars now. If we waited and some unknown catastrophe were to strike, wouldn't that be tragic? **Gabriel Tate**

MARS AIRS FROM 13 NOVEMBER ON NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL.



MARVEL'S AGENTS OF S.H.I.E.L.D.: SEASON 4 (E4) EARLY 2017

The hit-and-miss Marvel show looks set to win viewers back with the introduction of one flame-headed Ghost Rider.

LEGION (FOX) EARLY 2017

Dan Stevens (*The Guest*) stars as lead mutant in this comic adaptation by Marvel, with ties in to the big-screen adventures of the X-Men.

LETHAL WEAPON (ITV) TBC

Riggs and Murtaugh are being played by Clayne Crawford and Damon Wayans in this TV adaptation of Shane Black's classic buddy cop pairing.

ATLANTA (FOX) TBC

Donald Glover created and stars in this acclaimed comedy drama about an ex-rapper trying to manage his cousin's rap career.

raw justice

MARVEL GOES BACK TO BASICS...

DAREDEVIL: SEASON 1 15

SHOW ★★★★★ EXTRAS TBC

2015 OUT NOW DVD, BD EXTRAS TBC

When the rights to crime-fighting blind superhero Matt Murdock reverted to Marvel in 2012, it was decided intimate and gritty was the way to go, meaning a 13-episode origin arc on Netflix rather than a \$200m blockbuster. No spaceships and world-saving here, just lots of scrapping and scrabbling to keep Hell's Kitchen clean.

Smart move. And so we get Matt (Charlie Cox) and best pal Foggy (Elden Henson) struggling to start their law firm by day, and Matt, dressed in black, punching out Yakuza, Russian Mafia and more by night – the criminal element is rife in New York, preying on the fear and confusion rendered by 'the incident' (the alien attack in *Avengers*). But there's a big bad, too – crime lord Wilson Fisk, whispered about for a couple of episodes before appearing as Vincent D'Onofrio to colour in the boogeyman outline. He's the most complex, riveting MCU villain to date.

Always grounded and detailed yet ever-so-slightly heightened (blocks of vivid colour give a comic-book tinge), *Daredevil* is built on robust performances, terrific location work and jaw-plummeting fight scenes – thrillingly choreographed but skinned-knuckle authentic. A real triumph, this season was followed by *Jessica Jones*, also excellent, and a still-great-but-not-quite-as-great Season 2 of *Daredevil*. Next up is *Luke Cage* followed by *Iron Fist*, and then *Avengers*-style brawl-for-all *The Defenders*. **Jamie Graham**



The kiss of life was imminent.



WOLF CREEK 1.5

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2016 OUT NOW DVD, BD

EXTRAS Featurettes

It takes a small-screen production for *Wolf Creek* to finally have big-screen value, as the grindhouse feel of the original 2005 movie is replaced by stunning vistas showcasing the Australian outback. The brutal revenge plot and bloody violence are just as down-and-dirty as ever – when 19-year-old Eve (Lucy Fry) survives an attack by serial killer Mick (John Jarratt), she vows vengeance, while Mick is on the hunt for his runaway victim. The result is a grimy game of dingo-and-mouse in a slow-burn series with big pay-offs. **Matt Looker**



FLEABAG: SEASON 1 15

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS TBC

2016 OUT NOW DVD, BD, VOD EXTRAS TBC

As a brazenly candid sitcom about a young woman surviving the urban sprawl of London, *Fleabag* inevitably invites comparisons to US hit *Broad City*. And though its jokes about sex seem relatively moderate by the standards of that peerless show's anarchic imagination, it's refreshing to see the BBC produce something risqué and aimed at millennials. Phoebe Waller-Bridge stars and adapts from her own award-winning play from the 2013 *Fringe*, and one of the show's distinctive features is her fourth wall-breaking asides, which pay off when the tone enters more emotional territory in the second half. **Stephen Puddicombe**



STAR WARS REBELS: SEASON 2 PG

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★

2015-16 OUT NOW DVD, BD

EXTRAS Featurettes, Episode trivia

The second series of *Star Wars Rebels* is bookended by a pair of incredible two-parters involving Darth Vader and Darth Maul. Everything in-between alternates between nonsense (space whales) and high-spirited action (Princess Leia). The best episodes are the ones that move the larger plot along, with the Dark Side temptation of Ezra, and Ahsoka Tano finally discovering her master's fate. It's a darker direction for the show, but one that never loses the feel of the original trilogy. **Stephen Kelly**

ON
DEMAND

CRISIS IN SIX SCENES

STREAMING ★★★★★

2016 AVAILABLE NOW | AMAZON PRIME

Woody Allen's return to TV for the first time in more than 50 years might sound like a big deal, but *Crisis In Six Scenes* is really nothing more than a two-hour movie chopped into six 22-minute segments. But even at this length it feels somewhat stretched, though Allen's signature one-liners are very much in evidence, and the final two episodes kick things up a gear as the action descends into all-out farce.

Set in the tumultuous 1960s, it stars Allen as Sidney Munsinger, a wannabe novelist who – irony alert – is currently writing a dumbed-down TV series for the masses. A “limousine liberal”, his comfortable life with therapist wife Kay (Elaine May) is upended when activist fugitive Darlene ‘Lennie’ Dale (Miley Cyrus, engaging) hides out in their house, criticising Sidney's reliance on appliances and, worse still, eating his leftover chicken.

BEDTIME STORY

Woody Allen plays writer Sidney Munsinger, who's married to therapist Kay (Elaine May).

Despite the backdrop of the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement, *Crisis In Six Scenes* is as flimsy and throwaway as, say, *Small Time Crooks*, with much of the bicker-banter soon feeling repetitive. Still, there is fun to be had at Lennie's politicising of Kay's aged book club (contemplating a naked protest in front of the draft board, one of the ladies frets: “I need to lose six to eight pounds”) and it's a treat to see Allen, an octogenarian, shuffling around Brooklyn in an effort to get Lennie to Cuba... if only to be rid of her.

Worth viewing if you're a die-hard Woody fan, but there is better TV out there, and plenty of it. **Jamie Graham**



MEN, WOMEN & CHILDREN 15

★★★★★

30 OCT | NETFLIX

Get past the limp message (stay web-wise, kids!) and Jason Reitman's dramedy has some lucid, likeable perfs. Ansel Elgort, Kaitlyn Dever and (honest) Adam Sandler excel, while Emma Thompson drops droll filth-bombs.



A GIRL WALKS HOME ALONE AT NIGHT 15

★★★★★

27 NOV | AMAZON

Hypnotic in every lush frame, Ana Lily Amirpour's 'Iranian fairytale' rewrites vampire/western rules with moodily beautiful assurance. Sheila Vand's bloodsucker skateboards off with the film.



CRAZY, STUPID, LOVE 12

★★★★★

1 NOV | AMAZON

As a guy sharing sex advice with divorcee Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling steals this smart romcom, bringing a light comic touch and some weaponised abs. There's feeling in the fun, too, plus Emma Stone in top googly-eyed form.



JOY 12

★★★★★

4 NOV | SKY

David O. Russell's tribute to the Miracle Mop's inventor glides over its emotions a bit easily, but that barely matters when it's Jennifer Lawrence with the tools, bursting with charisma while grappling with the messiest family since the Tenenbaums.



KRAMPUS 15

★★★★★

6 NOV | SKY

Michael Dougherty's seasonal siege shocker sees a demon's barmy army invade a fractious family home. Think *Cabin In The Woods* with scare-shaped gingerbread and you're halfway there. Lots of fun, but the ending is like being gifted a lump of coal.



RIDE ALONG 2 12

★★★★★

11 NOV | SKY

After good work in the *Jump Streets*, Ice Cube's quality control falls in this unbidden buddy-cop sequel. He gives good quick-freeze stares as a hard-ass to Kevin Hart's rookie, but you'd do Cube more favours by revisiting *Straight Outta Compton*.



THE REVENANT 15

★★★★★

25 NOV | SKY

Alejandro González Iñárritu's epic is long and brutal, but worth it. Rewards include the landscapes, Leo DiCaprio's best teeth-chattering since *Titanic*, the bear with a fairly epic beef and method mumbler Tom Hardy mauling every passing vowel.



126



HARRY POTTER CAULDRON, SOUP MUG AND SPOON

HOMEWARE **OUT NOW**

There's a chill to the weather now, meaning warm soups or hot drinks are back on the menu. If you're a Potter geek, then this Black Cauldron soup mug, fashioned after the Potions class cauldron in the films, is a must-have. It doesn't magic itself clean but it is dishwasher and microwave safe, and also comes with a spoon and a lid (for saving leftovers). Watch out for envious friends who may try to Filch it.



HORROR CLASSICS AND DOCTOR STRANGE ANCIENT ONE FUNKO POPS

COLLECTIBLES **OUT NOW**

Tis the terrifying season to celebrate classic and contemporary horror icons with Funko's third series of Horror Classics Mystery Mini blind box figures. Any given box might hold characters from *The Shining* and *Beetlejuice*, Universal's *Mummy*, *The Silence Of The Lambs*, or even *Jaws*' Bruce the Shark. Or if you're in a far more Zen place, then grab a mini Tilda Swinton Funko Pop as she makes her debut as *Doctor Strange*'s Ancient One.



CLUEDO: GAME OF THRONES

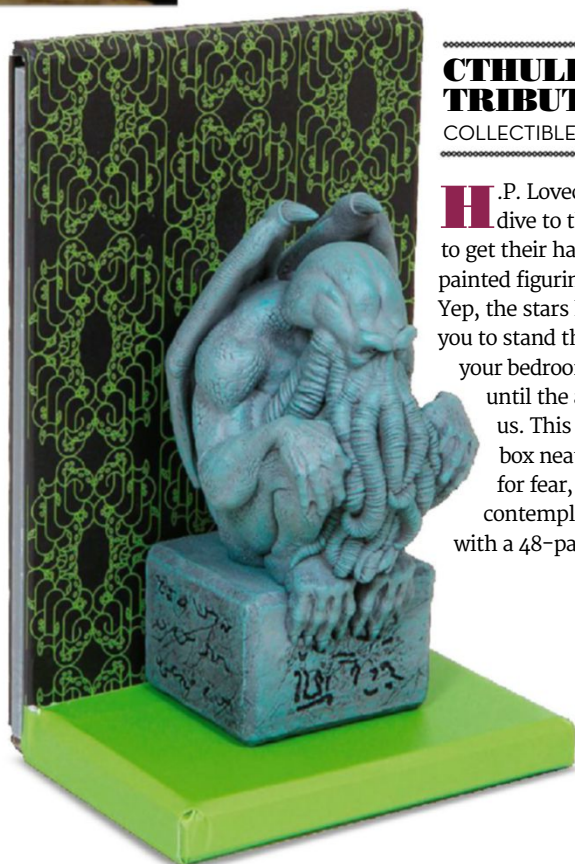
GAMES **OUT NOW**

Travel to the Red Keep or Meereen to discover who the murderer is, where the crime took place and which weapon was used: crossbow, poison vial, arakh, Faceless Man, catspaw assassin dagger or battle axe. This strikingly packaged game features a double-sided board, with two different mysteries to solve. Should help you while away the long, dark days until you can go back to Westeros for Season 7 of HBO's, ahem, game-changing fantasy show.

CTHULHU TRIBUTE BOX

COLLECTIBLES **OUT NOW**

H.P. Lovecraft fans don't need to dive to the bottom of the ocean to get their hands on this hand-painted figurine of The Ancient One. Yep, the stars have aligned to allow you to stand the cosmic being on your bedroom shelf – at least until the apocalypse befalls us. This figurine is, as the box neatly puts it, “suitable for fear, worship, or dark contemplation,” and comes with a 48-page illustrated booklet.



BB-8 WAFFLE MAKER

HOMEWARE **OUT 31 OCTOBER**

When's the last time brekkie made you as excited as BB-8 reuniting with Poe Dameron? Never? Well, the solution has to be this officially licensed BB-8 waffle maker, which transforms your breakfast batter into the impossibly cute droid. Non-stick cooking plates duplicate the bot's spherical shape and details on both sides, and it only takes a mere five minutes for one to be ready for your plate.

From ThinkGeek. **TB/JG**



BOOKS



two more

State of the concept art...



MARVEL: ABSOLUTELY EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ★★★★★

How old is Wolverine? How many times has Cap's shield been smashed? What's Squirrel Girl's favourite smoothie? Impossible to read without planning the geekiest pub quiz ever, DK's Marvel encyclopaedia works well as a flick-through bible to keep handy whenever you need to brush up on your back issues. A matte Hulk head hides an interior of panelled pages splashed to the margins with enough super-stats to stump Stan Lee.



STAR WARS: YEAR BY YEAR/ COMPLETE LOCATIONS ★★★★★

Two SW reference books get a post-*Force Awakens* update. If your coffee table can only bear the weight of one, go for *Year By Year: A Visual History*, a rollercoaster from George Lucas' baby photos to *Rogue One*'s release. *Complete Locations*, meanwhile, reveals Easter eggs such as Maz's sauna.



LABYRINTH: THE ULTIMATE VISUAL HISTORY

BOOK ★★★★★

PAULA M. BLOCK AND TERRY J. ERDMANN | TITAN BOOKS



Anything of utter loveliness, this bewitching book picks a path through the making of Jim Henson's 1986 children's classic, from look to legacy. Besides contributions from stars Jennifer Connelly and David Bowie (Helena Bonham Carter, Yasmine Bleeth and Mia Sara all went for the part of Sarah, formerly known as Taya; while Michael

Jackson, Freddie Mercury and Rod Stewart were all considered for Bowie's Goblin King role), it's a family affair. Toby Froud, who played Sarah's baby brother, offers an introduction; concept designs by his father Brian cover every nook and cranny; and Brian Henson and his siblings recall working on the project with pride. "My father had a way of trusting

people to be extraordinary," says the latter. And how.

Filled with half-finished drawings, behind-the-scenes photos and scribbled production notes, it's a book bursting with ideas, some of which flutter out when you open it. One memo tells us how little "Toby Froud wasn't quite as thrilled by the goblins as David Bowie"; another describes the tricky tone they were aiming for: "Wizard Of Oz meets *Poltergeist*." The overall effect is to plunge you into the filmmaking process as if you worked at Jim Henson's Creature Shop. "He really wanted this new fantasy movie to have a seamless reality," says daughter Lisa. Henson died in 1990 aged 53. It's tribute to his vision that it still bears such fascinated scrutiny. **Matt Glasby**



THE ART OF MISS PEREGRINE'S HOME FOR PECULIAR CHILDREN

BOOK ★★★★★
LEAH GALLO | QUIRK

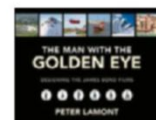
Brimming with atmosphere, Quirk's tie-in for Tim Burton's time-loop Ransom Riggs adap offers lavish reasons to linger. Although the making-of narrative gets dry, it packs in plenty of detail and the sumptuous pictures score. If the faded-sepia postcards and letters show fidelity to the novel, the weird weasels and devil dolls show Burton making himself at home in Riggs' world. **Kevin Harley**



THE ART OF AARDMAN

BOOK ★★★★★
MANDY ARCHER | SIMON & SCHUSTER

Bristol's animation powerhouse marks "40 years of creativity" with a loving raid on its archives that yields old favourites (Morph), unused concepts (a terrifying Were-Rabbit) and the odd surprise (Gromit with a mouth). As always, it's the detail that amazes: the ship interiors from *The Pirates! In An Adventure With Scientists!* for instance, or the "mechanical marvels" of *Cracking Contraptions*. A pity, though, to ignore art from the *Chicken Run* follow-up that never was. **Neil Smith**



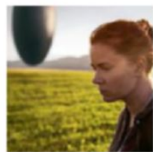
THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN EYE: DESIGNING THE JAMES BOND FILMS

BOOK ★★★★★
PETER LAMONT WITH MARCUS HEARN | SIGNUM

As draughtsman, art director and production designer, Lamont has had a hand in 18 Bond films. Who better, then, to guide us through the literal nuts and bolts of the volcano set from *YOLT*, the underwater car from *Spy* and many more beloved creations? Few have left such an imprint on the series, a contribution to which this memoir gives engrossing testament. **Neil Smith**

fresh spins

TF scores the latest soundtracks...



ARRIVAL

★★★★★

After his immense *Sicario* music, Jóhann Jóhannsson reunites with director Denis Villeneuve for the most out-there sci-fi score since *Under the Skin*. Sculpting skewed trials in tension and awe, Jóhannsson backs looped vocal chorales with alien drones and sumptuous strings, all to sublimely eerie and insinuating effect. Bring on *Blade Runner 2*.



THE LIGHT BETWEEN OCEANS

★★★★★

A composer who toggles between crowd-pleasers and prestige movies, Alexandre Desplat targets the classicist jugular for Derek Cianfrance's tragi-romance. Blending gently weeping piano, warm woodwinds and tremulous strings around swells of feeling, Desplat makes elegantly emotive work of 'A Wonderful Father' and 'The Return': cuts so heart-wringing, they practically require free hankies.



Trainspotting

VARIOUS / EMI PREMIER

CLASSIC
SOUNDTRACK

Movie history is intermittently spiked with moments where a star and/or filmmaker enter orbit to a great song. Think of Robert De Niro's Stones-scored *Mean Streets* entrance, or John Travolta's 'Stayin' Alive' strut in *Saturday Night Fever*. Ewan McGregor's Renton prefers trainers over Cuban heels, but you could tell by the way he used that walk that Danny Boyle's *Trainspotting* was also cut from momentous cloth.

Boyle, of course, has never slouched at picking music. From Leftfield in *Shallow Grave* to Godspeed You! Black Emperor in *28 Days Later...*, MIA in *Slumdog Millionaire*, Sigur Rós in *127 Hours* and Underworld everywhere – *The Beach*, *Sunshine*, 2012's Olympics do – it's a talent he has reiterated. But *Trainspotting* was a perfect-storm moment, where direction, stars, songs and a generation hungry for their movie converged.

And they converged fast, as soon as Iggy Pop's 'Lust For Life' slams in and Renton's trainers hit the tarmac. The junk-laced lyrics fit the film's themes like a tourniquet; the song's instant-hit attack, meanwhile, fulfils Boyle's aim

that the film "explode into life". That life takes many shapes, all well-chosen. Though the album became synonymous with Britpop, Boyle mapped rich, divergent musical routes towards the mid-'90s. He couldn't get the rights to David Bowie's 'Golden Years', but he got ambient bliss from Bowie wingman Brian Eno's 'Deep Blue Day'. And you can hear Bowie's influence elsewhere in Pulp's frisky belter 'Mile End' and Blur's more art-school 'Sing'.

Along the way, the song selection mixes 'n' matches moods, rollercoasting from filth to thrill, exhilaration to comedown exhaustion. Primal Scream's title track is a dubby epic. Set to Renton's overdose, Lou

Reed's ambiguously gorgeous 'Perfect Day' showed a flair for counterpoint. New Order's dancefloor revelation 'Temptation' galvanises; Iggy Pop's 'Nightclubbing' totters between the lure of decadence and its draining effects; and Leftfield's 'A Final Hit' is deep, dark and clubby.

But it was Underworld who provided *Trainspotting*'s heartbeat with 'Born Slippy .N.UXX', a barrage of ecstatic opening chords, reach-for-the-sky beats, festival-ready chants and underlying anxiety. Boyle said he was editing the film to the techno titans' *Dubnobasswithmyheadman* album when he stumbled on 'Slippy' in HMV; true or not, it's a tale of happy fate that rings true to the kind of generation-quaking pop/film alignment you just can't force. *Trainspotting*'s many copycats certainly failed to bottle the recipe. As for the incoming sequel: well, Boyle and Underworld remain on form. Choose optimism. **Kevin Harley**

GAMES



french toast

HOW THE STUDIO BEHIND DISHONORED BECAME THE BEST STORYTELLERS IN GAMES...

These days there are very few surprises in big-budget games. The top tier of blockbusters are so costly and difficult to produce that they invariably come from established teams at familiar studios – well-funded, well-managed and full of experience. It's almost unheard of for marginal figures to come up with a legitimate, triple-A hit.

Which is why 2012's *Dishonored* was such an unexpected pleasure. The game arrived courtesy of French developer Arkane Studios, which, while not totally unknown, had no right to deliver the game of the year in the midst of competition from big-hitting sequels like *Mass Effect 3*, *Halo 4* and *Max Payne 3*.

But it did. *Dishonored* is a stealthy, supernatural adventure set in a beautiful steampunk Victorian city. The game is thick with quality, littered with baroque visual touches, ostentatious gameplay flourishes, and grounded by a political thriller plot and slick stealth-or-showstopping violence gameplay. And, while it boasts a cast packed with Hollywood talent – Chloë Grace Moretz, Brad Dourif – the secret to the game's fantastic storytelling lies in its immersion, in the sense that your actions are shaping the world.

Having pulled it off before, Arkane is attempting to do it again – twice. The studio has two games in development:

Dishonored 2 at the company's original base in Lyon, due out 11 November; and sci-fi reboot *Prey*, due in 2017, at its new Austin, Texas off-shoot. The talent from the studio's breakout hit might be split (co-leads Raf Colantonio and Harvey Smith now head up one game each) but the philosophy remains the same. "We make one kind of game," says *Prey* director Colantonio. "First-person immersive sims."

For *Dishonored 2*, overseen by Smith, that means more of everything – more choices, more powers to play with, more environments to play in. "We wanted to make the bigger, better version of *Dishonored*," says Smith. "I've worked on sequels before and it's very difficult. It's nuanced. If you leave it the same, people are dissatisfied, and if you change it too much, people are dissatisfied." As a result, *Dishonored 2* features original hero Corvo, as well his daughter, the deposed Empress Emily Kaldwin, both

ABOVE
First-person
gameplay in Arkane
Studio's *Dishonored*.

playable with different sets of powers, offering two distinct campaigns.

Prey, meanwhile, is a little different. While the original *Dishonored* was an unknown entity, *Prey* has a past life as a 2006 shooter pitting Native American powers against alien invaders. While a sequel was in the works, Arkane has now taken the name and stripped it bare, rebooting the game in line with its successful ideology.

The new *Prey* will be a counterpart to *Dishonored*, a working out of the same choice-based storytelling, but this time on an abandoned space station, where the assimilation of supernatural alien powers will facilitate Arkane's trademark improvisational gameplay. Behind the scenes gameplay at this year's QuakeCon showed hero Morgan Yu using an alien mimic trick to shrink to the size and shape of a coffee cup. It's an unusual bit of levity for a game that's drenched in horror, but a perfect example of the endlessly imaginative results of Arkane's approach – an approach that combines top-class storytelling with fluid, flexible gameplay, and makes it the studio to watch, both this year and next. **Nathan Ditum**



EDITED BY JANE CROWTHER



132



132



133



134



135



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138



143



144



146

TOTAL FILM BUFF

CINEMA CELEBRATED
AND DEBATED. BOOSTING
YOUR MOVIE GENIUS
TO SUPERHERO
LEVELS...

this
issue

LONGING. RUSTED.
SEVENTEEN. DAYBREAK...
SEEING RED WHEN
TALKING FANFICTION

MY MOTHER SUCKS WHAT
IN HELL?
GETTING THE WOLF PACK
BACK TOGETHER

LAND OF THE RISING...
OH CRUMBS, NO!
V. GOOD? OR IS IT ALL
JUST FUCKWITTAGE?

INVESTIGATION

IS IT BOLLOCKS?

Film Buff investigates the facts behind outlandish movie plots.

THIS MONTH THE KILLER MIND CONTROL IN CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR



Q

In *Captain America: Civil War*, Bucky Barnes is activated as a killing machine when 10 random words are spoken to him. Is it possible to use hypnosis to 'programme' someone?

A

DR. KATE BEAVAN-MARKS

HYPNOTHERAPIST
DIRECTOR OF THE HYPNOTHERAPY TRAINING COMPANY

"Generally, using hypnosis, you *can* create a 'conditioned response'. Classical conditioning is where you respond to a certain stimulus, and operant conditioning is reward or punishment. In the film, they may have used a form of operant conditioning to enhance Bucky's response. His hypnosis implies some sort of enhanced programming from drugs or devices, which creates his extreme response. Could Bucky be hypnotised to act against his will? A person wouldn't go against their deep-seated beliefs and morals unless you change their perspective, which is what might have happened to him. For example, you wouldn't throw water on your boss, but if you believed they were on fire, you might do. Those trigger words – there's no guarantee they would *always* cause a response, especially after a long period of time because you're creating a neural pathway – like a path through a field – that can become dulled over time. As for the words themselves, it's better if they're random as you're far less likely to cause random triggering."

VERDICT KINDA BOLLOCKS

ALTERNATIVE BOX OFFICE

THE BIGGEST BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES... FEATURING **DRAGONS**



- 1 Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows – Part 2 (2011)\$1.34BN
- 2 The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) ...\$1.02BN
- 3 The Hobbit: The Desolation Of Smaug (2013) ...\$958.4M
- 4 The Hobbit: The Battle Of The Five Armies (2014)\$956M
- 5 Shrek 2 (2004)\$919.8M
- 6 Harry Potter And The Goblet Of Fire (2005) \$896.9M
- 7 Shrek The Third (2007)\$799M
- 8 Maleficent (2014)\$758.5M
- 9 Shrek Forever After (2010)\$752.6M
- 10 How To Train Your Dragon 2 (2014)\$621.5M

ON LOCATION

REEL SPOTS BEHIND THE CAMERA



1984



2016

WHAT? Jeff Bridges' alien needs an intergalactic pick-up in *Starman* (1984) when he's shot down by the US airforce over Wisconsin. He arranges an E.T. rendezvous at the vast 'Barringer Crater' in Arizona.

WHERE? Winslow, Arizona. meteorcrater.com

GO? Unlike Jeff you can't clamber into the bottom of this 580ft-deep, mile-wide monster, but for \$18 you can stand a-gog on the viewing platform marvelling at the size of the rock that barrelled into Earth at 26,000mph around 50,000 years ago, leaving this epic dint. *Starman* snow not included. *Thanks to Chris.*

Snapped yourself at a film location? Send us the details at totalfilm@futurenet.com

TOP 10

WIZARD OF OZ REFERENCES

Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!



01

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND

Wolverine describes Colossus as “Tin Man”. More strikingly, Jean Grey’s childhood home is swept up by tornado-like winds, just as a twister shifted Dorothy’s farmhouse from a sepia-toned Kansas to the Technicolor Land of Oz.



02

MILK

Gus Van Sant’s biopic of California’s first openly gay official, Harvey Milk, is a friend of Dorothy’s – it has Judy Garland’s iconic rendition of ‘Over The Rainbow’ (written especially for *The Wizard Of Oz*) playing during a San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade scene.

THE DEVIL’S REJECTS

In Rob Zombie’s brutal second film, sicko Otis tells two people in the desert to “follow the yellow brick road” before slaying them. Zombie repeats the trick in *Halloween II*, when Michael Myers is advised to “find the brick road”.



03

WILD AT HEART

David Lynch’s bonkers road movie contains multiple allusions to Oz, with Nic Cage’s on-the-lam Sailor even appearing in a crystal ball clutched by his lover’s murderous mum. Lest we were in any doubt, she’s the wicked witch of this particular tale.



04



05

MEGAMIND

“I tell you, Minion, there’s no place like evil lair,” says Will Ferrell’s baddie with a big blue bonce. So embedded in the global consciousness is Dorothy’s mantra, “There’s no place like home,” that the reference still works as a joke, 71 years after *Oz*’s release.



06

DEATH WISH

Homages to the 1939 family classic turn up in the strangest places... such as in Michael Winner’s reactionary revenger in which Charles Bronson kills street scum after his wife is murdered. Yes, that really is a lion, scarecrow and tin man at a costume party.

TOY STORY 2

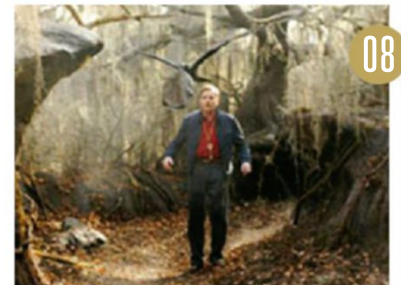
Woody says, “There’s no place like home” in the original, so the Barrel of Monkeys in the sequel (they’re Evil Dr. Porkchop’s minions) must surely allude to the Wicked Witch of the West’s terrifying winged monkeys. “Fly, fly, FLY!”



07

BIG FISH

A pair of ruby slippers can be seen hanging on a line, but our favourite *Wizard Of Oz* reference here must be the trees attempting to ensnare young Edward – surely a nod to the apple trees that grapple with Dorothy after she plucks their fruit from them?



08



09

STAR WARS

Akira Kurosawa’s *The Hidden Fortress* (1958) is a more obvious influence, but Luke Skywalker, just like Dorothy, dreams of adventure while living on a farm. Could Chewie be the lion and C-3PO Tin Man? Or is it Han Solo who needs to find himself a heart?



10

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT

Judge Doom, the much feared law in Toontown, plonks rule-breaking Toons in a vat of chemicals before meeting just such an end himself, yelling, “I’m melting, melting!” as he goes. The Wicked Witch of the West knows that feeling. **JG**

TOTAL FILM'S CONFESSIONS

DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS
OF THE TF TEAM.

THIS MONTH...
STAR RATINGS WE REGRET

RISE OF THE PLANET
OF THE APES ★★★

Should have been ★★★★★

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

★★★★★ Should have been ★★

THE HANGOVER 2 ★★★★★

Should have been ★★

POLTERGEIST (2015) ★★★

Should have been ★★

JUPITER ASCENDING ★★★★★

Should have been ★★

JACK THE GIANT SLAYER ★★★★★

Should have been ★★

HINDSIGHT CORNER!

Stars eat their words...



Shia LaBeouf

INDIANA JONES AND THE KINGDOM
OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL (2008)

JUNE 2008: "When Steven Spielberg becomes Steven... it's very strange. The dust never settles. You're constantly in this wild world, which is amazing."

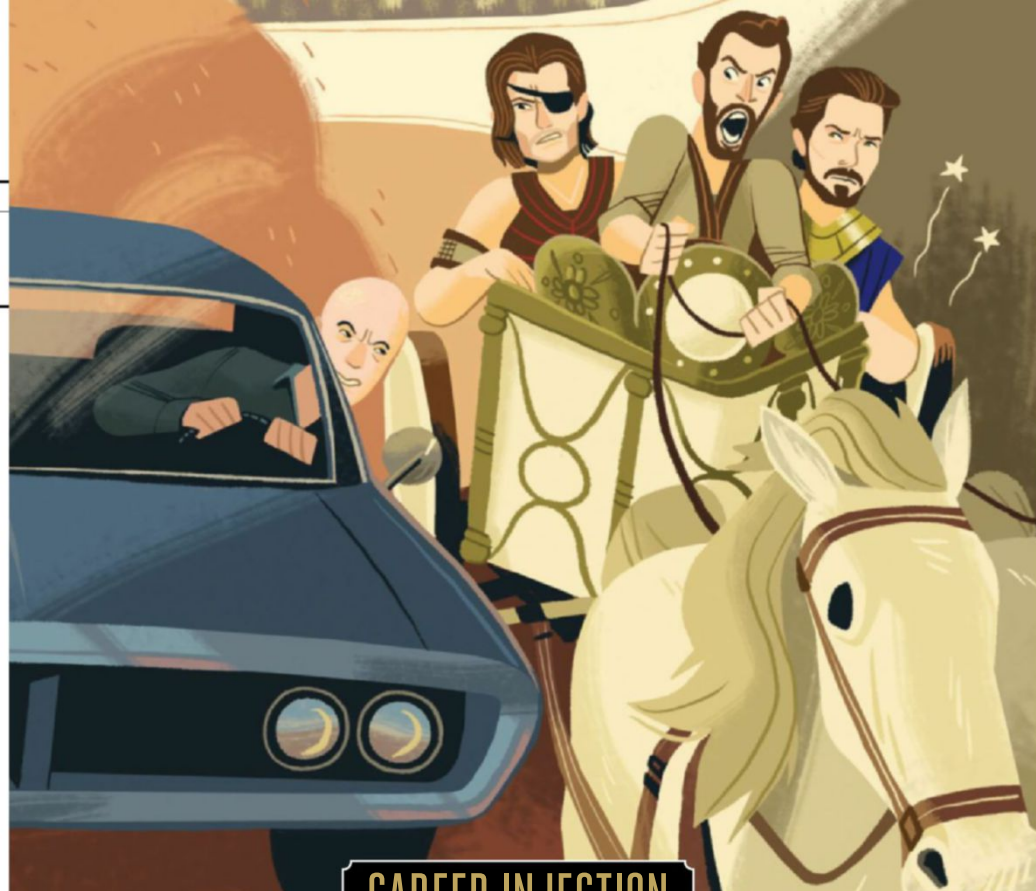
SEPTEMBER 2016: "You realise you're meeting a Spielberg who is in a different stage in his career. He's less a director than a company."

PLAIN TALKING

Learn the movie lingo

THIS MONTH: CHIAROSCURO

The clashing of two Italian words meaning 'light' and 'dark', chiaroscuro refers to the bold contrasting of, er, light and dark in scenes. Originally employed as an art term before being imported into cinema, chiaroscuro was a strong feature of German Expressionistic cinematography (*The Cabinet Of Dr. Caligari*, *Nosferatu*) and film noir.



CAREER INJECTION

SWORD & SANDAL MOVIES

Sun, sex, sanctimony, saucy togas. With all this and more to offer, Hollywood epics deserve better, bolder handling...

Hot wheels! Heated half-brotherly tussles! Sun-scorched man-thighs! Between these exclamatory sells, *Ben-Hur* could have been the runaway hit of a sweaty summer. Sadly, it trundled off-track like a busted chariot wheel with an £11.2m opening weekend tally and a 26 per cent Rotten Tomatoes rating, leaving only tough lessons to be learnt.

One lesson might be that spandex-weaned audiences hungry for a fast 'n' furious fix of slick CGI aggro are hardly likely to look to sword 'n' sandal movies. The point looks persuasive in the context of various, recent toga fails. *Exodus: Gods And Kings* underperformed; *Gods Of Egypt* couldn't be saved by an off-duty Lannister (Nikolaj Coster-Waldau) and a 300 graduate (Gerard Butler).

Yet perhaps these films simply misunderstood their genre. *Ben-Hur* rejected its 1959 predecessor's sweep for a streamlined rush – and we can get those elsewhere. In this context, its failure seems less disheartening. Perhaps its flop is simply a sign of audiences telling studios to try harder? A quick glance at the genre's past peaks tells us the effort can be rewarded...

After Cecil B. DeMille, D.W. Griffith and others oversaw early triumphs, the genre re-emerged in the '50s, as studios battled TV's rise with ginormous visions of sex, violence and excess: *Quo Vadis*, *The Robe*, *Ben-Hur*, *Spartacus*. But just as Rome fell, so the genre tumbled. By 1963's costly *Cleopatra*, the New Hollywood tyros were massing at cinema's city walls, raining arrows on Hollywood's more bloated extremities.

Yet Ridley Scott's *Gladiator* and, to a lesser but notable extent, Zack Snyder's 300 re-asserted the genre's viability. Both pioneered fresh spectacles, like the '50s widescreen and CinemaScope films did. They played fast 'n' loose with history, yet traded in punchy metaphors. *Gladiator* cast the right beefcake (Russell Crowe) and weaved in an emotive vengeance narrative.

Both mounted Hollywood-ised histories, of course, but they also showed how retellings of the past can reflect modern perspectives. And were we not entertained too? You can't say either about *Ben-Hur*. But if you take grandeur, spectacle and emotional wallop as the genre's cornerstones, there's no reason why the sword 'n' sandal epic shouldn't have its revenge. In this life or the next. **KH**

FIVE POINT FIX

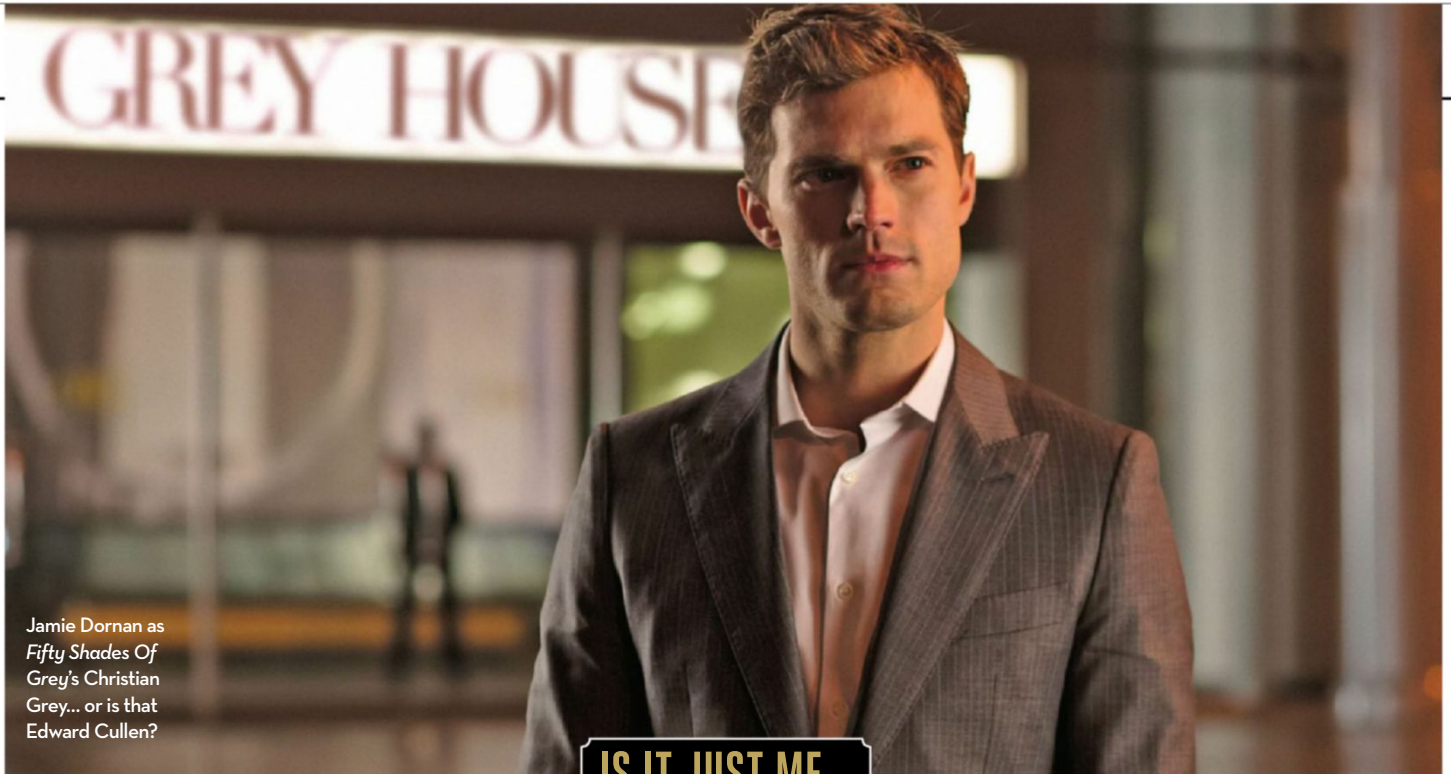
1 Use tech daringly. The genre has always been spectacle-rich, but fresh variants need to forge new ground.

2 Cast carefully. Russell Crowe ruled over *Gladiator*, but the often terrific Jack Huston sat awkwardly in *Ben-Hur*'s chariot.

3 Watch telly. If you can't match *Game Of Thrones* for pulverising spectacle, give up.

4 Think big. Streamlined summer pics are overdone: trust viewers' patience and embrace the epic.

5 Do you like movies about gladiators? Then let it steam: the new *Ben-Hur* muffled feelings that needed maximising.



Jamie Dornan as
*Fifty Shades Of
Grey's* Christian
Grey... or is that
Edward Cullen?

IS IT JUST ME...

OR SHOULD WE STOP USING 'FANFICTION' AS A CATCH-ALL PUTDOWN?

asks Kevin Harley

At a time when low-performing sequels have been heavily criticised, even three of the biggest follow-ups of the last 12 months haven't been immune. Two dominated cinemas, the other owned the stage. But one thing links *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *Captain America: Civil War* and *Harry Potter And The Cursed Child*: they've all been accused of peddling 'bad fanfic'.

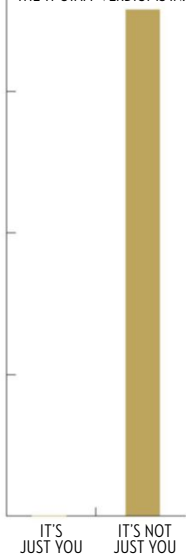
You don't have to look too closely to see that the criticism does fanfiction and the stories in question a disservice. First up, if you take fanfiction to mean fans' self-pleasuring, under-plotted variations on characters and stories by Real Authors, the films and play above mount plenty of resistance. True, *The Force Awakens* echoes *A New Hope*

and *Cursed Child* brims with *Potter*-world references. But both are continuations of previous stories rather than reboots, so some echoes are inevitable and necessary. Besides, both incorporate these echoes with thematic cogency. You could call them "fanfic with a budget", but the question then becomes: so what, if it works?

The twist, of course, is that they aren't fanfic in the literal sense. Fanfic is DIY-based, written by fans without resources – and there's more range and value to it than one definition or dismissal admits. Sub-genres are numerous, and they can offer young people (often young women) an open means of expression. And it isn't all soft porn, contrary to opinion.

E.L. James' *Twilight*-riffing *Fifty Shades Of Grey* gave fanfic a bad name

OFFICE-OMETER THE TF STAFF VERDICT IS IN!



for many people, but fanfic's quality is, arguably, not intrinsically more variable than pro-fic's quality. And plenty of big writers have embraced fanfic culture. Naomi Novik (the *Temeraire* series), Cassandra Clare (*The Mortal Instruments*) and others have written it; Neil Gaiman has defended it.

Doctor Who arguably offers a special fanfic case. After the TV series hit cancellation street in 1989, spin-off novels and audio-plays helped keep it alive. Fans wrote these – and many of them later wrote for the post-2005 reboot-as-continuation. In other words, fanfic isn't easily reduced to one simple meaning. And it certainly means too much to be routinely trotted out as a dirty neologism. Or is it just me?

Share your reaction at www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm or on Facebook and Twitter.

LAST MONTH ARE THERE BETTER STEPHEN KING ADAPS THAN SHAWSHANK?

DANIEL TAYLOR

Dreamcatcher is better viewed as a comedy.

ending, *Dreamcatcher*? What a load of tosh.

PURPLE CONE

Shawshank is awesome, but it's not as terrifying as the book.

DAVID RATCLIFFE

I love *Shawshank*, but don't want it to become untouchable. There's no way *Green Mile* is better. That's troll speak. *Stand By Me* however...

JON BEESON

The Mist nearly does the job, only to spoil it when it takes your emotional investment round the back of the barn and gives it both barrels.



PEGGERS

I'm not sure many people would name *Shawshank* above *The Shining*, *Carrie* or *Misery*. I've always had a soft spot for *Pet Sematary* and *Christine*.



THE BIG SHOT

SEEING THE LIGHT IN THE EXORCIST

The cab pulls up and out steps Father Lankester Merrin, pausing beneath a streetlamp to look up at the home of 12-year-old Regan MacNeil, whose possessed soul he's hoping to save. His silhouette cutting a solitary, striking figure through the beam of light emanating from Regan's bedroom, it's an image steeped in atmosphere and isolation. Unsurprisingly, it filled the poster for director William Friedkin's 1973 classic, the first horror film to be nominated for a Best Picture Oscar.

It was no accident that Max von Sydow was framed in such a way outside 3600 Prospect Street, in the Georgetown area of Washington DC, the scene being taken directly from a line in *The Exorcist's* source material, William Peter Blatty's 1971 novel of the same name. Blatty wrote that Merrin "stood motionless under a misty streetlamp's glow, staring up like a melancholy traveller frozen in time".

"I had to find a way to visualise that," Friedkin told *DGA Quarterly*. Armed with a Panavision 35mm camera, the real challenge was achieving the unusual lighting. "I allowed a full day to light the scene," continued Friedkin. "We used arc lights and Troupers, in addition to boosting the practical lighting like the streetlamps. After a great deal of trial and error, we filmed on the second night."

As director of photography Owen Roizman emphasises, "The shaft of light is everything, it has an ethereal quality, it just feels very spiritual."

The reason behind such particular lighting was that Friedkin, after trawling art galleries and books, had found a way to visualise the scene, his solution being to recreate René Magritte's *L'Empire des Lumières* (*The Empire of Light*).

Painted by the Belgian surrealist in 1953, the oil on canvas depicts a nocturnal street beneath a daytime sky. Making viewers question light, and experience an unsettling feeling normally associated with darkness, it clearly struck a chord with Friedkin, with the idea becoming a theme for the entire movie.

"I designed the film so that there would be these blazingly bright scenes, as in Iraq and the cold light of Georgetown in the fall," says the director, "and these dark scenes in the exorcism room. The whole film would alternate between the forces of dark and light in a literal way." Perhaps, as Merrin himself says, "The point is to make us despair." **AW**



AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON

In 1981, John Landis changed the face of horror with groundbreaking effects, a savvy script and a trip to England's capital. Total Film meets the director and cast of **AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON** and learns to stay off the moor...

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

TF CLASSIC

When I was a teenager, watching movies like *Casablanca*, *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Wizard Of Oz*,” reflects John Landis, “I was thinking, ‘God, these movies are 35 years old!’ Now I have a movie of my own like that!” Sitting in a white-walled room, wearing a suit, shirt and tie, he’s talking *An American Werewolf In London*, his enduring horror classic that – on the night we meet – is receiving a special screening at the Venice Film Festival thanks to a new digital restoration.

The story of two American backpackers, Jack Goodman (Griffin Dunne) and David Kessler (David Naughton), who are attacked on the Yorkshire moors by a werewolf, *AAWIL* was the film Landis always wanted to make. “I wrote it when I was 18. I tried to flog it for years. But I couldn’t give it away,” he recalls. Then came his directorial debut, the zany *Kentucky Fried Movie*, followed by *Animal House* and *The Blues Brothers* – “three in a row that made a great deal of money” – and Landis landed the financing.

The idea had come to him in 1969 when he was a production assistant on the Yugoslavia-shot *Kelly’s Heroes*, after he and other crew witnessed an elaborate gypsy funeral – a garlic-wrapped corpse buried feet-first in a grave in the middle of a crossroads. Yet Landis cherry-picked other influences. “It is very much based on *The Wolf Man*,” he says, referring to 1941’s Lon Chaney-starrer written by Curt Siodmak. “He introduced the theme which was new: that the werewolf was the victim.”

This notion of lycanthropy as a disease dominates *AAWIL*. While Jack is killed on the moor, David is left scarred – infected by the werewolf, destined to mutate and maul until the ravenous creature’s bloodline is severed. “I always looked at it as a character

with a tragic flaw,” says Naughton. “He had a terminal illness – something was going to happen to him that he had no control over. He couldn’t beat it, and it wasn’t something that was going to escape him. He had to just face it.”

With David confronted by the undead Jack, who urges his disbelieving friend to take his own life before the next full moon, it’s a set-up by turns terrifying, tragic, comic and even strangely romantic. “When I read the script, I thought, ‘Whoa, this is going to be really hard to pull off,’” remembers Jenny Agutter, cast as Alex Price, the British nurse who takes a shine to David when he is shipped to a London hospital to recuperate. “But he [Landis] knew exactly how to make it go from comedy to horror.”

Landis’ adeptness at switching tones came to be one of the film’s defining attributes; one minute, David is wryly discussing silver bullets with Jack’s rotting corpse (still played by a prosthetics-clad Dunne), the next he’s plagued by dreams of machine-gun-wielding mutant Nazis setting fire to his family home. “That was very disturbing,” recalls Naughton. “It was John’s idea of what could be a real nightmare. We were burning the set down, we had the fire brigade there and John kept saying, ‘Don’t put it out yet!’” From the

expertly selected soundtrack (‘Bad Moon Rising’, ‘Blue Moon’) to the black humour (not least David waking up naked in London Zoo), it was simply unlike any other horror. “Normally you spend your entire

time running and screaming

and just being a victim,” says Agutter, whose character’s love affair with David adds real emotion to the film. “Jenny was a good sport,” adds Naughton. “She was the only woman on the set, with all these guys with raging hormones in the midst of turning into werewolves!”





LAYERING UP
David Naughton embraces '80s fashion and (right) with Jenny Agutter.

With a \$30 million budget, Landis had "total and absolute control", from signing the cheques to selecting the stars. While the supporting players needed to be British, due to the by-laws of a generous tax-break he was taking advantage of, the director was able to cast the largely unknown Dunne and Naughton as leads. "We were over in London, really, with no adult supervision!" laughs Naughton. "There were no studios, no people coming around in suits to check out the action."

Filming the interiors chiefly at Twickenham Studios, the shoot began with the "non-stop orgy" that was 'See You Next Wednesday' – the porn film (starring real-life Page 3 girl Linzi Drew) playing in Piccadilly's Eros Theatre in the final act. Originally meant to be a Road Runner cartoon, Landis changed it to a skin flick when he realised how many of London's fleapit cinemas were showing smutty movies. The crew were taken aback. "There were all these jokes," remembers Naughton, "like, 'What's the wrap party gonna be like?'"

From there, the production decamped to Wales to shoot the early scenes at the Yorkshire moors – with Naughton and Dunne's first scene, unusually page one of the script, with

the two of them riding in the back of a sheep truck. Shot around the Black Mountains, with East Proctor in reality the village of Crickadarn, Landis may have chosen it for logistical purposes, but Wales and werewolves went hand-in-hand. "In the Middle Ages, they killed 2,000 people [there for being suspected lycanthropes]," the director notes, "hung them, butchered them."

One of the more curious sightings in the early scenes is a young Rik Mayall in the eerie pub, The Slaughtered Lamb (actually a boozer called The Black Swan in Surrey). Landis had seen



Mayall and Adrian Edmondson perform at London's Comic Strip one night. "They were so funny," he recalls. "After the show, I went up to them and said, 'I'm making a movie. I'd like you both to be in it.'" Edmondson had an audition on the day of shooting and didn't turn up, but Mayall made it – immortalised forever playing chess with Brian Glover.

With another memorable sequence shot at Tottenham Court Road Tube station, as one luckless commuter is savaged, Landis' determination to film landmark locations paid dividends. None more so than the unforgettable denouement in Piccadilly Circus, as David's werewolf causes havoc after escaping from the porno theatre. Yet filming in central London had been virtually non-existent since Michael Winner had let a smoke bomb off in a taxi while filming his 1967 crown jewels heist *The Jokers*. "It bought the city to a standstill!" recalls Landis. "So the cops then were like, 'That's it, fuck off!'"

To save the boys in blue, Landis set up a screening of *The Blues Brothers* at the Empire Leicester Square, inviting 300 coppers from the Metropolitan Police and Scotland Yard to see the carnage he wreaked upon the streets



DEAD LIKE ME
Griffin Dunne spent hours in the make-up chair.





– were created to show growth on camera. For the scene where David is on his back, his wolf-like legs twitching in the air, Naughton was actually hidden in a hole in the floor, with just his own head and arms sticking up, as he was covered with a false body.

So the story goes, Baker – who would eventually claim an Oscar for the newly introduced Best Make-up category – was “profoundly upset” when Landis shot the protruding snout sequence briskly. “I said, ‘Action.’ It did its thing, and I said, ‘Cut. Alright, we have it, let’s go, next!’” Landis says. “And Rick turned to me, ‘What do you mean we have it?’ I said, ‘Well does it do anything else?’ He said, ‘No!’ And I said, ‘Well, we have it!’”

While Naughton bore the brunt of it, Dunne also had to face hours in the make-up chair to show Jack’s increasingly decaying flesh. For his final skeletal appearance in the porno theatre, a puppet was used. “I knew Griffin – being an actor – wasn’t going to like the fact that a third of his part in the movie was being done by a puppet, even though the voice was his,” Baker noted. And so, with an operator working the model from below, he asked Dunne to manipulate the jaw, as he read the lines from behind the theatre seat.

Shot in February and March 1981, the film opened in the US in August that year, where it grossed \$30 million. The aim was to beat Joe Dante’s *The Howling* to cinemas, which it didn’t, but *AAWIL* still proved a sensation. “I used to sneak into movie theatres with audiences,” recalls Naughton, “knowing where all the scares were and see the terror on their faces. It did look painful. Some people would leave. They just couldn’t handle it, they were so scared.”

In 1997, a barely connected sequel *An American Werewolf In Paris* starring Julie Delpy was released. “Is that really a sequel?” says Naughton. “Other than ripping off the title. I thought the film fell pretty far short.” More recently, Landis’ son Max (screenwriter of *American Ultra*) hinted he’s working on a remake of one of his father’s films, with many speculating it was *AAWIL*. Certainly it’d be a fitting way to see the bloodline continue.

***An American Werewolf In London*
35th Anniversary Blu-ray is out now.**

of Chicago with its 38-car pile-up. It evidently worked: permission was granted for the Piccadilly Circus finale to be shot between 2.30am and 3.30am over two evenings, as a bus skids 180 degrees, a taxi rams into it, a passenger crashes through a top-deck window and is run over when he lands roadside.

With a mock-up of the street built at Brooklands racetrack near Weybridge, where some shots were obtained, Landis’ crew – led by stunt co-ordinator Alf Joint, who’d begun his career doubling for Sean Connery in *Goldfinger* – were so well drilled he only needed to shoot it twice when it came to the real thing. Stopping traffic for four minutes, controlled chaos ensued at the Circus, with legendary stuntman Vic Armstrong even driving the bus. “It was like clockwork,” Landis grins.

Yet the film’s pièce de résistance was saved until last; the staggering transformation where David turns agonisingly into a werewolf. Partly to allow special effects guru Rick Baker time to perfect his creations, partly to finish principal photography and let the rest of the crew go, the final week was dedicated to the scene. Naughton spent up to ten hours in the make-up chair as prosthetics were applied. “We’d do two or three shots a day at the most. Poor David, it was torture!” laughs Landis.

ABOVE
Rick Baker’s effects resulted in the creation of a new Oscars category.

BELOW
Naughton checks out a puppet version of his co-star.

Perhaps it was fitting, for this metamorphosis truly emphasises the pain of the procedure – as limbs elongate, nails crack, hair bristles, teeth grow and a snout forms. At the time, nothing like this had ever been done on film – with Baker using “comparative anatomy” to help prepare. “I didn’t have a wolf skeleton in my collection, but I had a dog’s and that was close enough,” he told *Cinefex* magazine. “Comparing it to a human, you find that many of the bones are similar; it’s just that the proportions are different.”

Making lists of the differences – what might get longer or shorter – Baker began to build up his ideas for the transformation. A full body-cast of Naughton was made in Los Angeles; mechanical ‘Change-o’ sections – for the head, the hands, the legs and back



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INSTANT EXPERT

J-HORROR

Wicked watches of the East...



Japanese ghost stories and morality tales, often involving vengeance, date back to the Heian period (794–1185), and were prevalent in the Edo (1603–1868) and Meiji (1868–1912) periods. They were known as Kaidan ('Kai' meaning 'strange apparition' and 'dan' meaning 'talk' or 'recited narrative'). As with literature, theatre often featured revenge and/or ghosts, while poltergeists, possession and exorcism are other key themes.



Japanese horror (or 'J-horror') crept on to the screen in the '50s and '60s, setting the template for films to come: deliberately paced, psychological, insidiously creepy. Classics include *Ugetsu*, *Jigoku*, *Kwaidan* and *Onibaba*. In the late '60s, a strain of eroticised exploitation emerged (*Horrors Of Malformed Men*, *Blind Beast*), and 'splatter eros' exploded in the '80s: the *Guinea Pig* series featured torture and sparked 'snuff movie' rumours.



Hideo Nakata's *Ringu*, about a cursed videotape, started a J-horror boom in the early noughties, with several classics – *Audition*, *Ju-On: The Grudge*, *Dark Water*, *Kairo* – manifesting. These eastern chillers were an eerie delight after *Scream* had ushered in smart-arse slashers in the West.



American horrors such as *The Blair Witch Project*, *The Sixth Sense* and *The Others* picked up on the icy vibe blowing in from Japan, while there were the inevitable US remakes – a half-decent *Ring* franchise starring Naomi Watts, a so-so *Grudge* franchise starring Sarah Michelle Gellar, a 'meh' *Dark Water* starring Jennifer Connelly, plus the godawful *Pulse*, based on Kiyoshi Kurosawa's masterpiece *Kairo*.



The craze dissipated in the late noughties, while Oz Productions (*Ringu*, *Ju-On*) went into bankruptcy proceedings in 2015. But Takeshi Miike's recent *Over Your Dead Body* is his best for years, *Sadako Vs. Kayako* entertained this year's FrightFest crowd, Kiyoshi Kurosawa is getting *Creepy* and there's a home-grown Godzilla movie set to rampage. And lest we forget, US sequel *Rings* is reviving the franchise in 2017. **JG**

KEY MOVIES



ONIBABA

1964 **★★★★**

Two women kill samurai and sell their armour to buy rice, then a demon-masked figure begins to appear in the long reeds at night... Visually striking, erotic, genuinely unnerving.



RINGU

1998 **★★★★★**

Watch a videotape, die a week later... This seminal marrow-freezer kick-started J-horror's boom years. Sadako crawling from the TV to click and clack her way across the room is pure *brrrr*.



AUDITION

1999 **★★★★★**

A mild, middle-aged man looks for a demure young wife and instead gets chopped up with piano wire. Gorno doesn't get more distressing than Takashi Miike's shocker. Kiri-kiri-kiri...



KAIRO

2001 **★★★★★**

Spirits invade the world through the internet. Sounds rubbish, actually the apex of J-horror, posting a genuinely apocalyptic vision. Kiyoshi Kurosawa matches David Lynch for insidious dread.



CLASSIC SCENE

BLUE VELVET

The opening of Lynch's American Dream...



01

VELVET UNDERGROUND

David Lynch's work with the composer Angelo Badalamenti began here, with Lynch communicating his wants in moods: "Beautiful, cosmic, floating." Luxuriating over an almost nauseatingly plush backdrop, Badalamenti's piercing theme sets the seductive but sickly tone beautifully.



02

COLOUR CODING

Lynch dissolves and descends dreamily into white-picket-fence America, inspired by his youth, memories of Bobby Vinton's title track and the book *Good Times On Our Street*. Lynch considered "de-saturating" the colours but preferred DOP Fred Elmes' hyper-real, hyper-American reds, whites and blues.



03

PROTECTION RACKET

Lynch pitched *Blue Velvet* as a "neighbourhood picture", set in "a world of opposites". After a fireman waves in wistful slo-mo, children cross the road in a shot that's both idyll and warning. The crossing guard with the *Eraserhead* hair is there to help, yet the raging sky and 'STOP' sign unnerve.



04

WATCH WITH MOTHER

Finding his parents' cleanliness unnerving, Lynch imagined kinks in their life. Here, he mixes homeliness with something haunting. As a mother watches telly, the noir-ish film on screen and weird doll behind her suggest spooky intrigues. "Film is really voyeurism," said Lynch. "We want to see secret things..."



05

INNOCENCE AND EXPERIENCE

In charged images of a man watering his garden, Lynch stages a tableau of youth, age and bad psycho-sexual plumbing. As a toddler watches an old-timer suffer a stroke (note lurid position of hose), the beast lapping up spurting water is Lynch's mutt Sparky.



06

WHAT LIES BENEATH

Autobiography meets avant-noise as insects mass. Al Splet microphone'd a beaker of mosquitoes for his experi-sound design, while Lynch channelled youthful memories of watching ants on a cherry tree. "There's this beautiful world and you just look a little bit closer," said Lynch, "and it's all red ants." **KH**

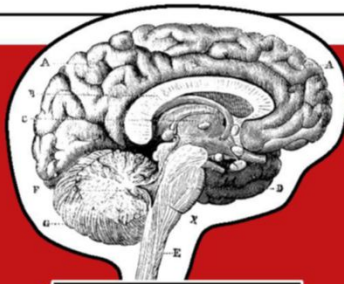


EASY

1. What's the full title of Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove*?
2. What's the festive name of Denise Richards' character in *The World Is Not Enough*?
3. What is Doc Emmett Brown's excitable two-word catchphrase?
4. Who is Dr. Henry Jones Jr. better known as?
5. Who plays Dr. Evil's Mini-Me?

MEDIUM

1. In which '90s drama does Tom Cruise play a doctor?
2. Peter Capaldi played a W.H.O doctor in which 2013 film?
3. How many *Carry On* films have the word 'Doctor' in the title?
4. Who played Doctor Dolittle in 1967's



THE TF BRAIN

DOCTORS

Doom! Dolittle! Denise Richards! Test your knowledge, then call us in the morning. (Don't.)

Richard Fleischer-directed original?
5. What is Doctor Doom's full name?

HARD

1. Who directed 1962's *Dr. No*?



2. Three films with Doctor or Dr. in the title have been Best Picture-nominated. Name 'em!
3. Which two actresses have played Dr. Carol Marcus in the *Star Trek* movies?
4. Who are Dr. Victor Fries and Dr. Pamela Isley otherwise known as?
5. In *Airplane!*, how does Dr. Rumack (Leslie Nielsen) respond to the question "A hospital! What is it?"

ANSWERS:
EASY 1. *Dr. Strangelove Or: How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Bomb* 2. Dr. Christmas Jones 3. "Great Scott!" 4. Indiana Jones 5. Verne Troyer
MEDIUM 1. *Eye* 2. *Carry On Doctor* 3. "Carry On Doctor" 4. Rex Harrison 5. Dr. Victor Von Doom
HARD 1. *Dr. Strangelove* 2. *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* 3. *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* 4. *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* 5. *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*



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FADE IN:

INT: BEDROOM

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER's body clock wakes her up. She starts to lament her love life to refrains of 'All By Myself'.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Oh, I don't need to do this any more! It's been 12 years since the last film and I'm ready to explore fresh and exciting new territory!

She starts dancing to 'Jump Around', a song from 1992. Then she makes her way to a funeral to mourn Hugh Grant's contractual negotiations.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Oh no, COLIN DARCY has turned up! We used to be in love, but it didn't work out and now he is here with his wife. Is everyone up to speed now?

COLIN DARCY

Wait, I've won an Oscar since the last film and Hugh Grant is the one that didn't want to be here?

INT: NEWSROOM

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER works as a successful news producer, who's clearly in a position of some power and respect. She immediately makes a stupid mistake that results in a catastrophic live broadcast.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Oops! Sorry, I was just being a loveable everywoman! It's my adorable clumsiness, y'see. I'm just like all women and I just do things that all women do, and that's why I'm so charmingly relatable.

She gets into a festival with VIP backstage passes, meets ED SHEERAN

and somehow accidentally sleeps with Hollywood heartthrob PATRICK DEMPSEY.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Apparently my friend was correct. I just needed "a good shafting".

PATRICK DEMPSEY

Hmm. In terms of the film's positive feminist message, I would say we were in a tricky area with that one.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Does it help if I call it "bonking"?

EXT: CHRISTENING

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER holds a baby and poses with COLIN DARCY for a camera specially designed to capture obvious moments of foreshadowing.

COLIN DARCY

Kiss me, BRIDGET.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

But what about your wife?

COLIN DARCY

We're getting divorced, so you and me are free to fall back in love and live happily ever after in blissful, sweet romance.

They shag.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Ulp! Now I'm pregnant and I don't know which heartthrob actor the father is! It's another classic, relatable Bridget dilemma!

EMMA THOMPSON

Don't worry, I'll be on hand both as your obstetrics doctor and the film's script doctor, making sure that the film stays funny by giving myself all the best lines.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER tells both Hollywood heartthrob PATRICK DEMPSEY and stiff upper Brit COLIN DARCY that they are the father, a bit like a car boot *Mamma Mia!* A montage depicts the nine-month gestation period of their rivalry until BRIDGET finally goes into labour.

COLIN DARCY

Come on, BRIDGET. Let's get to the hospital in a humorously inept way. Then we can be together again despite never once making each other happy.

PATRICK DEMPSEY

No, choose me! This is fresh and exciting new territory, remember? You have to pick the new guy to show character growth and mature storytelling.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

I love you, COLIN DARCY.

PATRICK DEMPSEY

Unbelievable.

INT: CHURCH — ONE YEAR LATER

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER and COLIN DARCY get married and we discover the baby is his. PATRICK DEMPSEY is still hanging around though, which is a bit creepy.

COLIN DARCY

Sorry, chap, but I will always be her love interest, in this film and every other one after it. Nothing can stop that.

BRIDGET ZELLWEGER

Er... I wouldn't read the last book if I were you...

FIN

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